

SAYYID TURKI B. SAID: ATTEMPTS AND CHALLENGES

IN RULING OMAN 1871-1888

BY

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DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis has been my own work and it does not represent the study of any other person, and that all work which has been consulted is duly acknowledged where reference has been made.

ABSTRACT

This study has the principal aim of emphasising the success of Sultan Turki b. Sa'id's attempts to take power in Oman after the death of his father in 1856. It describes in detail his attempts, and his period of government, with reference to the British presence and attitude towards the Sultan, which had for some time given him considerable assistance in settling his problems with his opponents inside the country. This study also gives details of the British policy towards Oman from the early sixteenth century and the regional situation with reference to the appearance of the Ottoman Empire in Central Arabia and the Wahhabi dispute with the Government of Muscat.

Chapter 1 provides a historical background, relating to British policy towards Oman, and the Ottoman Empire's influence in the Arabian Peninsula and the Wahhabi threat to Oman. It discusses the internal circumstances which were to help Sultan Turki gain power in Oman. Chapter 2 concentrates on the discussion of the situation in Oman that followed the death of Sayyid Sa'id b. Sultan, and the reign of Sayyid Thuwaini 1856-1868, with reference to the role of Sayyid Turki b. Sa'id in this period. It also describes the troubles between Muscat and Zanzibar that were settled by Lord Canning's Arbitration in April, 1861. The third chapter describes the Turki-'Azzan dispute during the time of Sayyid 'Azzan b. Qais, 1868-1871, including the British attitude towards that dispute, and the India Government's action through their representatives in Muscat and the Persian Gulf. The subject of the fourth chapter is a description of Sayyid Turki b. Sa'id as one of the paramount characters in the modern history of Oman. Furthermore, it examines the manner in which the Sultan regained the throne, and British policy towards his Government. The discussion in the fifth chapter concerns the Sultan's arguments with his opponents, such as Sayyid 'Abd 'al-'Aziz, Ibrahim b. Qais, and Shaikh Şalih b. 'Ali al-Ḥarṭhi, and the Sultan's efforts to exert his power in the country.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

b. Bin or Ibn.

Cd. Command Papers.

Dept. Department.

El. Encyclopaedia of Islam. (2nd edition, London; 1986.).

For.Dept. Foreign Department.

F. O. Foreign Office Record.

Govt. Government.

Gov. Gen. Governor General (the Viceroy).

G. J. Geographical Journal.

H. B. M. Her or His Britannic Majesty.

H. H. His Highness.

H. M. S. Her or His Majesty's Ship

Hon'ble. Honourable.

I.O.R. India Office Record.

Lt.Col. Lieutenant Colonel.

M. or Mons. Usually appearing before French names in this study, meaning Mister (or Monsieur in French).

Ms. or Eur Mss. European Manuscripts.

\$MT. Maria Theresa Dollar.

P.A.M. Political Agent at Muscat.

Polit. Dept. Political Department.

P. R. P. G. British Political Resident in the Persian Gulf.

P.P. Parliamentary Papers.

R. O. Records of Oman 1867-1947.

Rs. Rupees.

Sd. Sayyid.

Sect. Dept. Secretary's Department.

SQU. Sultan Qaboos University (Oman).

GLOSSARY OF ARABIC WORDS APPEARING IN THIS THESIS

Amir: Prince.

Baghlah: An Arabic sailing vessel used for trade in the Indian Ocean by the Omanis and the Arabs of the Peninsula.

Banian: A title still in use today for the Indian merchants residing in Oman and East Africa.

Ghafiri and Hinawi: The principal political divisions of Omani tribes. These emerged as a result of the Civil war in Oman in the early eighteenth century (1723-1728) and acquired the names of Hinawi and Ghafiri in Omani society. The names of these political divisions have been used in Oman from that time onwards. However, the main fact in this tribal division is that the majority of the Hinawi tribes are descended from Qahtani, or Yemeni roots, or the Arabs of the South, e.g. Bani Hina, al-Hirth, al-Hajriyyin, al-Habūs, Bani Rawahah, etc. The majority of the Ghafiris are descended from 'Adnani, Nizari roots, or the Arabs of the North, e.g. Banu Reyam, al-'Abriyyin, al-Janabah, Bani Bū 'Ali, Bani kharūs, etc. The civil war was headed by two famous military men, Muhammed bin Nasir al-Ghafiri (those who supported him were known as the Ghafiri faction), and Khalaf bin Mubarak al-Hinaie, titled "al-Qusayyer" whose supporters were known the Hinawi faction. This war led to the establishment of the Al Bū Sa'id Dynasty (which still rules Oman), when the Omani tribes elected Ahmad b. Sa'id b. Ahmad as their Imām in 1744, until his death in 1782. This political division of the tribes played an authoritative role in the history of this country during the period of troubles.

Ibadi: An Islamic sect to which a large number of Omani tribes.

Itawa: A certain amount of money paid annually by one side to another, according to an agreement between the two parties, or because of political influence.

al-Jabal al-Akhder: The highest mountain in Oman, about 3,000m above sea level, located in the interior.

Khor: Inlet or creek.

Naib. A representative for someone, to achieve something on his behalf or to be his representative somewhere.

Nokhada: Master or Captain of a Dhow.

Qadi: Judge, or Magistrate

Rial: Omani National Currency.

Sayyid: The title of the Al Bū Sa'id Dynasty. It is equal to Master, and appeared in Oman as a ruling title during the Ya'aribah Dynasty, but became more official under the Al Bū Sa'id Dynasty.

Tamimah: The paramount figure among the tribal Shaikhs; the leader with control over all members of his tribe, and dependent upon their support in the course of internal Omani disputes. He played a powerful role in the internal politics of Oman throughout its history, until some time in the second half of the twentieth century.

Shaikh: Synonym of the word Ameer; he can be the leader of a tribe, a district and even a country, like the Shaikhs of the United Arab Emirates for example.

'Ulema: Paramount religious scholars who have a powerful spiritual influence on ordinary people, and are highly respected by them in any situation.

Wadi: Valley.

Wakeel: Synonym of Naib.

Wali: The Governor, or the representative of the Imam or the Sultan, in the towns.

Wazir: A Government Minister.

INTRODUCTION

From the second half of the nineteenth century Omani history has been an important topic for many historians, in particular it has become the focus of European researchers who have contributed greatly to studies. The many different aspects of Omani history such as political, social, and economic, have contributed to its distinctive character. Omani's complex tribal history involves many disputes, the outcome of which sometimes influenced the political course of events. Omani history is worthy of discussion by numerous researchers attempting to provide a more detailed analysis.

In this study we take the opportunity to attempt to investigate part of Omani political history, relating to Sultan Turki b. Sa'id's reign, 1871-1888, and the dispute concerning British interests and influence in this state during that period. This study will take into consideration British aims during the period discussed, which can be summarised as trying to find a way of controlling key issues in Oman, helping them to establish a strong position in the region. The study will also follow up the rationale behind Sultan Turki's policy regarding his position and the attitude of the tribes.

The period which followed the death of the great Sayyid Sa'id b. Sultan in 1856, has been considered the most critical period in the history of Oman and Zanzibar, for it witnessed many internal and external events, and the most important issue was the unity of Muscat and Zanzibar which had been brought about by the efforts of Sultan Thuwaini. The question of the takeover of Zanzibar by the Government of Muscat, however, was seen as unrealistic and would have been very difficult to achieve after the year 1856; indeed all Sayyid Thuwaini's attempts in this regard ended in failure. Consequently the matter was resolved by Lord Canning's Award in 1861, in which the British Government confirmed the separation of Muscat and Zanzibar, and respect for their independence and the dignity of their Sultans.

In general this study will outline the main course of events and provide reference material on which this study largely depended.

In essence the main area of this research will be concentrated on Sayyid Turki's time in power and his relations with the British Government with regard to his internal policy, analysing the factors which culminated in his successes in dealing with his own difficulties, with British support to achieve his objectives. This study includes the question of Sultan Turki's activities during his brother Sayyid Thuwaini's reign (1856-1866), the period of Sayyid Sālim b. Thuwaini (1866-1868), and the reign of Sayyid 'Azzan b. Qais (1868-1871). Under the wise leadership of Sayyid Turki b. Sa'id most of the tribes of Oman had come under his control, and he managed to re-gain the right of Sa'id b. Sultan to rule the country despite all attempts to force him to resign the sovereignty of Oman. He succeeded in defeating Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali, Ibrahim b. Qais and his brother Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz b. Sa'id's attempts to dismiss him from power. In overcoming all these troubles he also managed to avoid Omani disunity and discord.

A detailed analysis of the continued troubles and the Sultan's attitude towards the British Government is also given taking into account their respect for the independence of Oman, resulting from the Anglo-French Declaration in Paris in 1862. However, although they had always offered advice and suggestions to Sayyid Turki and later his son Sultan Faisal, the British Government widened the scope of their relations with Muscat to further their interest in the country. On the other hand Sultan Turki gained practical British support in his time of need, as well as the continued guarantee of the payment of the Zanzibar subsidy to Muscat, despite the fact that Muscat was not a British colonial state.

Various studies relating to this period have provided additional information about the history of Oman, such as J. B. Kelly's valuable work "Britain and the

Persian Gulf 1795-1880". The book contains much useful information regarding British policy in Oman and the Persian Gulf region in the period between 1795 and 1880, and relevant facts associated with British rule in India. The work has put substantial value on the political history of the Gulf, and presents a valuable description of the foundation and the growth of British political influence in the Persian Gulf in the nineteenth century. Kelly's work covers a significant period of events in Persia and the Arabian Peninsula, including the activities of the Wahhabis of Nejd who were to be a dominant political force in central and eastern Arabia with influence extending to the Gulf coast for most of the nineteenth century. He also gives a clear explanation of the development of British policy in the Gulf itself, and describes the position of the Gulf as an outgrowth of overall British Near-Eastern policy. Additionally, he takes into consideration the Turkish challenge over different places in Arabia and the Gulf. With respect to Oman the author provides significant information relative to the history of Muscat and its relations with Zanzibar over the traffic in slavery. The work is an important source for those who intend to study the history of the Gulf and Oman and British political influence in the region.

R. G. Landen's work "Oman since 1856", is another significant study in the history of Oman and the Anglo-Omani relations through the Government of India. Landen's study of the period between 1856 and 1914 narrates the growth of British imperial involvement in Oman in particular, and in the Persian Gulf in general. The study covers the history of Oman's indigenous population during the period of this study and much about the way it reacted to British exploratory policy exercised in the time of troubles in Oman. Landen tries in this study to analyse the events and trends within Oman after 1856, during a crucial period when its ancient maritime and tribal society was buffeted by change beyond its control and the understanding of most of its local population. Foremost attention has been devoted to the 1862-1903 period, when various accommodations to the new economic, and internal political realities were

reached. The final chapter presents an outline of Oman's history in the twentieth century until the early 1960s.

R. Kumar's book "India and the Persian Gulf Region 1858-1907", is also an important work, especially with regard to British political relations with the Gulf region and Oman. The work provides useful background to the British political involvement in the Gulf principalities, and describes the Turkish position and activities in the Gulf, and the first international conflicts in the Persian Gulf and Oman. The book outlines the British representatives' views on different issues in Omani's affairs during the second half of the nineteenth century, as well as helpful information concerning the Government of India's relations with Muscat from 1858-1905, and its instructions on how to deal with these troubles without affecting its position in the country. He tries to show Britain's position in the development of events in Oman and Britain's attempts to act without giving assurances.

In the first two chapters of his Ph.D. "A history of Omani-British Relations, with Special Reference to the Period 1888-1913", al-Mousawi provides a general background of Anglo-Omani relations, from 1620 to 1856. The study also gives an enlightening explanation of the Sultan Faisal b. Turki's relations with the British alongside material on the Government of India's views on British intentions towards Oman. The study discusses extensively the British project for protectorship over the Sultanate of Muscat and Oman in 1890-1895, and British action to establish themselves in Muscat, whilst exclude any foreign powers like France from doing so. The main part of this study provides details on the arms traffic to Oman in particular, and to the Persian Gulf in general, providing essential information on the export companies, and the impact of the trade on the Gulf and Oman, from the first traffic operations until 1920. In this study al-Mousawi is faithful to the official attitude of trade in the region and the British restrictions on the arms trade with reference to Sultan Faisal's cooperation with the British in this matter.

These studies have examined the issues of this period under general discussion, and concentrated on many different matters, and continue to be prominent pieces of research in Omani's history.

The principle aim of this study is an attempt to provide some additional knowledge, on the history of Oman, British influence, and the policy of the Sultans of Muscat during the relevant period. This policy led to much criticism by those who considered it foreign interference in Omani internal affairs, and resulted in several revolts against Muscat, led by for example Shaikh Ṣaliḥ b. 'Alī al-Ḥarṭhi, 'Abd al-'Azīz b. Sa'id, and Sayyid Ibrāhīm b. Qais on the Batinah coast. The reason for choosing Sultan Turki's reign was mainly to show the importance of this period in Omani history, and outline the role he played in uniting Oman by re-establishing the Al Bū Sa'id Dynasty in the state of Oman.

The chapters of this thesis will show the range of internal problems which arose in relation to conflicts in Oman. As far as we know, no previous attempt has been made to discuss all matters which faced Sayyid Turki, and the internal situation of Oman in this period within a single work. The study is an attempt to describe and analyse Britain's actual relations with the Government of Oman and the consequences of these relations on Oman's history, a fascinating factor in the history of modern Oman. We will also outline the British Government of India's policy and order, relating to the various problems which troubled the Government of Muscat, as it was the guardian of the British interests there. In the context of highlighting Omani political history during the relevant period, we have investigated the roles of the British Political Agent, and the British Political Resident in the Gulf, because of the importance of their position in helping the Government of India to make its decisions. The unity of Oman was the main thrust of Sultan Turki's policy.

In essence the unity of the country had collapsed when the Sultanate was declared in the twentieth century. Muscat and Oman appeared separate and distinct and this indicates that Muscat, like Oman, is a region or country. In reality, Oman is the entire country, while Muscat is its capital but had been included in the title in the previous years of the twentieth century because of the city's reputation and importance. The situation remained like this until 1970, when on the 9th of August 1970 Sultan Qaboos b. Sa'id declared that the country would no longer be called "Muscat and Oman", but would be unified as the Sultanate of Oman.

A review of the sources used in the study

From the start of this research, we have aimed to accumulate as many of the available documents as possible and any information specifically related to our study. During the time of our research, we have covered a number of source materials, contemporary works of travellers and politicians, articles, reference books, Hansard, the Parliamentary Papers, the Records of Oman and some other sources. In this study we relied primarily on British material. Undoubtedly this reflected British interests, however, we tried to analyse the subjects of this official information and examine the situations that they dealt with. The published British Archives were also important sources for this study, as they sometimes provided copies of Arabic letters sent to the Government of India, giving the views of the Sultans and the Imām on the problems in the country. The letters always showed the interest of the Omani Governments to be in accordance with the member of the Government of India and the British representatives in Muscat and the Persian Gulf.

A considerable problem facing this study was the disappearance of (in the meantime virtually unknown) Omani primary sources, which presumably provided a contrast to Arabic letters written by rulers or their opponents which can be found among the huge volumes of the India Office Records. The only Arabic and Omani

source for the period of this research is the book of 'Abdullah b. Ḥumayd., al-Sālimi, *Tuhfat al-A'yan bi Sirat Ahl 'Uman*, Muscat; 1978. This important work provides the opinion of an Omani historian on many issues throughout the history of Oman. The book is divided into two volumes. The first one deals with the history of the Arabs of Oman from early times to the establishment of the State of the Bani Nabhan in Oman. The second volume is an account of the establishment of the sixth Imāmate of the Ya'aribah in 1624-1743, and the establishment of the Al Bū Sa'id dynasty in 1743. The work also contains important information on the history of Oman during the Imāmate of 'Azzan b. Qais, the reign of Sayyid Turki b. Sa'id, and Sultan Faisal b. Turki.

Here we would like to introduce briefly the most important material which has been consulted in the course of this study's investigation.

Official and unpublished documents

The India Office Records, especially the material of the Indian Foreign Department, Political and Secret Department, were among the most important documents used in this study. We have used these documents for the history of Oman and her relations with Great Britain and the Government of India. They comprise various collections of letters and reports, which are contained as enclosures in the correspondence sent by the British representatives in the Gulf, to the Government of India, and the correspondence sent by the Political Agent at Muscat (PAM) 1800-1951, (549 volumes), and many European manuscript collections, such as the Eur. Mss. of Sir Lewis Pelly (1825-1892) relating to the Persian Gulf States, as well as to Oman

Public Records Office

Among the documents available in this library in Surrey are the many different series of Records like reference 27 (France) with many files dealing with Anglo-French

relations concerning Muscat, reference 54 (Muscat), containing 36 volumes which also have a great deal of information relating to Muscat and its relations with France and Britain, reference 60 (Arms Trade), and reference 84 (Slave Trade). The Public Records material has been essential to this study, regarding the Franco-Omani relationship.

National Library of Scotland

The library contains many original documents and manuscripts relating to the history of Oman during the time of Sayyid Sa'id b. Sultan and during the period of this study, such as Ms. 12659 which provides a summary of the proceedings of the Government of India in the Foreign Department during the Viceroyalty of His Excellency the Earl of Minto, from November 1905 to July 1910. There are also other original Papers in the library, like those of Lord Curzon of Kedleston under the classification number Ms. 12593, which were examined. The manuscripts give a summary of the principal measures taken by the Viceroyalty of His Excellency Lord Curzon between January 1899 and April 1904, including some correspondence between the Government of India and the Foreign Office and information about the Viceroy's tour of the Gulf states in 1903, as well as including information on significant events of the time.

Published documents

This material is based on published archive collections and documents.

1. The Administration Reports of the Persian Gulf Political Residency and the Muscat Political Agent, especially volumes 1-6 of the years 1873-1911. These reports contain a summary of the annual reports of the principal events in Muscat and other parts of the Persian Gulf up to 1947 relating to the internal affairs of the region, trade, and the economic situation, and the tribal situation.

2a. Aitchison, C. U., (ed). A Collection of Treaties, Engagements, and Sanads Relating to India and Neighbouring Countries.

2b. Lorimer, J. G., Compiler. Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, Oman and Central Arabia. These two archive works provide very important information to anyone researching the history of the Gulf states, tribes, politics and economy, from the beginning of the European presence in this region until the early twentieth century. They also give a valuable collection of treaties signed between Britain, Oman, and the rest of the Persian Gulf states and principalities. There are some other works similar to these documents which were investigated in this study, such as Hurewitz, J. C. Diplomacy in the Near and the Middle East: A Documentary Record: 1535-1914; Scott, J. B. (ed). The Hague Court Reports; and Tuson, P. & E. Quick, (eds.). Arabian Treaties 1600-1960; All these documents have essential information regarding many different treaties and events in the Gulf states and Oman.

3. The Parliamentary Papers Series volumes between the years 1871 and 1906 have considerable data, reports, and correspondence relative to the Persian Gulf and Omani internal affairs from the early nineteenth century to the year 1861. These Papers have been very useful to this study regarding the slave trade, and reports and material on the Anglo-French dispute in Muscat up to the announcement of the Hague Court's Award in August 1906.

4. Saldanha, J. A. (ed). Precis series volumes as follows Muscat Affairs 1869-1905; Naval Arrangement in the Persian Gulf, 1892-1905; Correspondence on Internal Rivalry and British Policy in the Persian Gulf, 1872-1905; Slave Trade in the Gulf of Oman and the Persian Gulf, 1873-1905. All these archive documents can be considered detailed works on Omani history and affairs until 1905, which have also provided indispensable information to researchers of the history of

the Gulf region with clear explanatory notes on British policy in the Gulf and Oman during the relevant years.

5. Baily, R. W. (ed). 1988. Records of Oman 1867-1947. (12 Vols). This is a huge collection of official information relating to Muscat and its relations with the Government of India, the British attitude to the Sultans of Oman, and the tribal situation, with events in Oman during our period of study. Volume 6 of these Records provided essential information with regard to Oman's relations with France. Most of its information has been taken from the India Office Records documents which can also be found under the title R/15/6, Political Agency, Muscat, 1800-1947, and L/P&S/, Political Residency, Persian Gulf.

6. The Times newspaper, printed books and important articles. These sources, which are listed in the bibliography at the end of this thesis, helped us to complete this work.

British Policy towards Oman and the Regional Context

More than any other power, Britain was aware of the situation in Oman. Britain had long been a party to the rivalry factors in Oman. In 1646 a treaty between Oman and British was signed, between the Ya'arabi Imām Nasir b. Murshid and the British East India Company, which gave the Company exclusive trading rights in Oman. Since this Company administered India from the early sixteenth century to the year 1858, the history of the East India Company is crucial to any explanation of the background of the early relations between the rulers of Muscat and the British Governments.¹

From about 1650 until the early nineteenth century Anglo-Omani relations were dominated by British commercial interests and the trade with the Persian Gulf region, which had created a foundation for British political interests.² The British exploited the influence that the East India Company had established to strengthen their political and strategic position in Oman and the Persian Gulf. However, the true origins of British political relations with Muscat go back to 1798, when Napoleon's expedition to Egypt threatened British interests in India, and aroused fears that the French aim was to use Muscat as a base for attacks on British and Indian shipping, or even for an invasion of India. From that time on the British were very careful about the presence of any Frenchmen at Muscat for any reason, as the British suspected this might extend the French influence in the Oman territories.³ The British took this issue seriously and this was a factor in establishing a Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, who was based in Bushire. Initially, their policy towards Oman was directed primarily to commercial interests, and only later did the British seek political influence over Muscat. In fact the following British policy towards Oman showed their anxiety over competition with other European countries and France in particular, which might threaten their interests in India, the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf.⁴ As a result of

this policy, Britain made certain agreements with Oman, in order to limit the freedom of rival powers to establish an influential position with the governments of Oman.⁵

The protection of the routes to India was the main British interest in Oman. This encouraged them to increase their influence in Oman and the Arabs shaikhdoms of the Persian Gulf and the Persian tribal groups in the southern Persian provinces for the rest of the nineteenth century.⁶ This was primarily to thwart rival European powers such as France or Russia.

British political relations with the rulers of Muscat developed rapidly after the death of Sayyid Sa'id b. Sultan in 1856. In 1864 Sultan Thuwaini agreed to become more agreeable to British policy in his country, and signed with them a telegraphic agreement for the use of Muscat as a terminus for a submarine telegraph cable.⁷ This indication of mutual interests was one of the factors that persuaded Britain to conclude the anti-slavery treaty in 1873, and the treaty of March 1891. These treaties led the British to object strongly to any European plan for a foothold in Muscat. The dispute with France over Oman emerged after 1861, and intensified British objections to French activity over the protection of the Sultan of Muscat's subjects.

Herewith the situation had changed rapidly towards the consolidation of the British position in the region. From the beginning of the British involvement in Gulf affairs, Muscat proved an important factor in altering their policy to assert a strong influence over the coastal area of the Sultanate.

1.1. British involvement increases in Oman

The dispute between the Sultan of Oman and Zanzibar over the division of the country after Sayyid Sa'id's death soon extended British involvement. The Sultan of Zanzibar refused to continue the payment of the Zanzibar subsidy to Muscat. The Sultan of Muscat then planned to mount an expedition against Zanzibar to reunite it

with Muscat and to force Sultan Majid to relinquish his power. The British were very concerned about this matter and the Government of Bombay found themselves in favour of settling the issue through Lord Canning's Arbitration in 1861, opening a new era of Anglo-Omani relations.⁸ Subsequently the affairs of Oman from then on were conducted primarily to serve British interests. In effect this amounted to British jurisdiction over the State of Muscat giving them a valuable trading port, naval base, and control of the entrance to the Persian Gulf. The Sultan of Muscat had been reasonably well disposed towards the British who guaranteed receipt of the Zanzibar subsidy and supported his government in internal disputes. After 1870, British Omani relations were consistently friendly, building on their mutual support on the aforementioned issues. It was also clear that the British representatives in the Persian Gulf and Muscat were more suitably qualified, and the British Government of India easily took control of Gulf affairs. Accordingly successful British policy towards Muscat, was dependent on the disputes in the country, which regularly increased their naval presence off Muscat's waters.

The subsequent appointment of the British Political Agent in Muscat made the Government of India free to defend their political interests in the Sultanate. The activities of the Political Agents in Muscat and the Political Residents in the Gulf, were mainly controlled by the Government of Bombay until 1873, and then by the Government of India until 1947, and any action beyond their authority might cost them their position, as happened to Pongelly when he supported Sayyid Thuwaini without proper authorisation.

In July 1861, the British Political Agent in Muscat, Lt. Pongelly acted hastily in surrendering Sayyid Turki at the time of his trouble with Sayyid Thuwaini, without the government of Bombay's approval, and as a result his employment as Political Agent in Muscat was terminated.⁹ Lt. Colonel Pelly, the British Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, also acted without authorisation from the Bombay Government

when he left his position in Bushire to watch Sayyid Turki's movements off the coast of Oman. This had not been approved and the Governor-General in Council instructed him not to go beyond his authority as a Political Resident.

However, British policy in Oman was principally shaped by the opinions of the Political Agents and the Political Residents' towards events inside the country. These opinions were not always determinant in the course of events, for example when Sayyid 'Azzan b. Qais, overthrew Sayyid Sālim b. Thuwaini in 1868, Pelly was instructed to proceed to Muscat and proposed an armistice, but Sayyid 'Azzan was not to be deflected and began operations against Sayyid Sālim.¹⁰ However, Sayyid Sālim finally complied with the Resident's advice to surrender the status to Sayyid 'Azzan, and to leave Muscat on board H.M.S. *Vigilant* with British Government approval, although no official recognition to the 'Azzan government had been granted. This policy strongly affected Sayyid 'Azzan position in the eyes of Sayyid Turki who ^{was} the main challenger, and encouraged him to act effectively against his government throughout his time in power.¹¹

During the conflict between 'Azzan and Sayyid Turki, and Sayyid Turki with his opponents, the British Government of Bombay always advised against the Omanis transporting their forces by sea. This policy was made official under the conditions of the treaty of 24th August 1853, concluded between the Shaikhs of the Trucial Coast and the British Government in the interests of a perpetual maritime truce. The conditions of this treaty enforced a complete halt to hostilities at sea upon the lives or property of those of any of the parties to this agreement, and the British were immediately authorised to punish the assailants and proceed to offer full redress to those being brought to their notice. The treaty ensured that the British would take the necessary steps to obtain the peace at sea and prevent any hostilities that might be attempted at sea.¹²

During the time of the conflict between Sayyid Turki and Azzan b. Qais, a firm policy on the question of the maritime truce was extended to the Gulf of Oman. Commodore Heath, the Commander-in-Chief, East Indies Squadron had brought this matter to the Governor-General's attention in February 1869. The Governor pointed out that while the instructions issued by the Admiralty and the India Office in August 1869 confined the operation of the truce to the Persian Gulf, henceforth, the Government of India had forbidden operations by sea or against the regime at Muscat. The discussion of this matter had resulted from the authorities of the British Government of India not having hesitated in the past in maintain maritime peace and preventing warfare at sea by states not party to the truce. This resulted from a realisation on their part that the India Office and Admiralty instructions were too narrow in scope. The Foreign Secretary to the Government of India C.U. Aitchison, declared that the extension of the maritime truce to the Gulf of Oman was embraced within a line drawn from the southern coast of Muscat territory to Gwader on the Mekran coast.¹³ The maritime truce had now become a strategic point in British policy to supervise the movements of Omani rivals at sea. The British policy towards the matter was based on maintaining their telegraphic lines in the region, and ensuring the protection of the British Indian subjects on the Omani coast who were seen to be under a direct threat from the use of force by the conflicting parties in Muscat.

The treaty of 1853 was an extension to the one which had been signed with Trucial Oman in 1835 for the purpose of maintaining peace at sea and the protection of neutral commerce. The signatories were agreed that a portion of the Gulf on the Persian side should be placed out of bounds for tribal warfare, even during the times when no truce existed.¹⁴ The essence of this policy emerged with the increase trade in British Indian subjects trading in the region. In early 1870, a great deal was moving into the hand of the Indians merchants, and some other merchants who were agents of modern business concerns, with headquarters in India or Europe.¹⁵ Muscat had

remained unquestionably the most important centre for Indian traders in the Gulf area, though the trade to Muscat was declining rapidly as a port and business centre in the region, affected by the introduction of steamers.¹⁶

1.2. The Banian community's appearance in Oman

It is very difficult to define when the first Indian merchant decided to settle or to establish themselves as a merchant community in Muscat, or indeed anywhere on the Omani coast. However, according to S.B. Miles there was settlement in Muscat territory occurring no later than the fifteenth century.¹⁷ His main evidence was the old Hindu temple ruin in Qalhat, the main Omani port during the Portuguese occupation of the country. The premise of fifteenth century settlement is supported further by de Albuquerque, who indicated that the Hindu merchants from Gujerat escaped from Khor Fakkan on the Gulf of Oman before his occupation of the port in 1507.¹⁸ During the period of the Portuguese in Muscat, the Portuguese depended strongly on the Indian Hindus in their attempts to keep the trade in the Indian Ocean under Portuguese control and assisting them in their occupation of the country. The merchants of the Indian community had managed throughout the following centuries to keep themselves in the main group that dominated the trade of Muscat and the Gulf region, despite the political disputes and the dynastic conflicts in the nineteenth century.

The first serious crisis which faced them, and the most hard-hitting commercial disaster occurred during Sayyid 'Azzan b. Qais's reign. However, the peaceful situation of this merchant community was gradually restored in the reign of Sayyid Turki b. Sa'id, and once again the Banians assumed control of trade, and set about recovering Muscat's commercial importance by trading with India, Europe and America.¹⁹ The Banian traders' position in Oman today is highly regarded and they have the right to reside in Oman as long as they wish to be there.

British commercial interests in Oman in the nineteenth century were to keep these groups of Banians in a safe haven, and keep the import and the export of goods under their control. There were also American traders in Muscat who had possibly been involved in competition, but Muscat customs were usually farmed out to a Banian merchant for £110,000 yearly.²⁰ It was believed that the trade into the ports of Oman, such as Sur, Sohar, Barka and al-Masna'ah fluctuated depending on the peacefulness of the situation in the country, and the Sultan of Muscat always expected a small amount for his treasury from these ports.²¹

1.3. Bombay and the role of the Government of India

These two British Governments were Britain's most important and influential authorities outside the geographical area of the United Kingdom during the eighteenth, nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century, after taking over responsibility from the East India Company. In the first decade of the nineteenth century, the Government of Bombay had become the direct superior of the British Political Residents in Baghdad and Basra, as the Resident at Bushire was already under the control of the Government of Bombay. These Residents were prohibited from corresponding directly with the Governor-General in Council of the India Government. The Muscat Agency also was put under the direct observation of the Bombay Government through their Resident in the Persian Gulf at Bushire, whose political actions had largely appeared as a mediator in the transmission of letters and reports between Muscat and Bombay. The Resident's role was also a political one, giving advice to the Agency in times of difficulties in Muscat. All Agents and Political Residents in the region were considered to be civil servants in the Bombay Government. In August 1834, it was suggested that the entire affairs of the Persian Gulf be transferred from the Government of Bombay to the Government of India, and that the Government of Bombay should have nothing to do with the Residency at Bushire, but this did not happen. Instead, it was decided that the Government of

Bombay should continue to act on its own initiative and only if a question arose involving British political relations in the general region of the Gulf would a reference to the Government of India become necessary. The Resident continued to receive his political orders from Bombay until 1873, when these responsibilities were finally transferred to the Government of India. However, until that time they were obliged to address all their orders and despatches to the Government of India, sending them by way of Bombay.²² They were to act for themselves in all matters in the Gulf of importance or involving political questions, and they had to refer first to the Government of Bombay, and afterwards to the Government of India, if they had time, but if not they should judge the situation and act on their own responsibility. The Political Agent in Muscat was more restricted, and his responsibility was to refer to the Resident on any important question, but sometimes he had to act on his own authority, or to refer directly to the Government of India, which mostly approved his actions, but he had to communicate to the Resident by sending him a copy of his correspondence with India.

In fact issues of political importance were despatched to London, mostly to inform the Foreign Office of what was going on in the region. Under these circumstances, London and the British authorities in India co-ordinated their responses to events. The Foreign Office left the total responsibility for taking decisions about their policy in the region entirely in the hands of the British authorities in India. A strong London stance towards British policy in Muscat can only be seen during the Anglo-French disputes over Muscat in the last decade of the nineteenth century onwards. The matter of French policy in Muscat in 1899 seemed to be a sensitive question which needed more care from the Foreign Office to deal with, and more discussion before a decision was made.²³

From Sultan Turki's reign onwards, British policy towards Oman had rapidly changed to his favour, with the settlement of his internal situation and the continuation

of their financial and armed support to his government becoming the priority of British responsibility towards Muscat. The interest of protecting their British Indian traders, and the maintenance of the maritime truce in the region would strength their superiority over other competitive powers. The Government of India had committed itself to a policy of involvement for which there was no clear legal basis but which was expedient for them to adhere in order to enable trade to continue without hindrance. This policy was exercised by the India Government until 1947, when the Foreign Office afterwards continued the action from London directly.

1.4. The Ottoman Empire in Arabia

In the early sixteenth century the Ottoman Turks, having now occupied Egypt extended their influence in the area. In about the last decade of the same century they occupied al-Hasa, of which Fatih Pasha became the first military governor and the Hejaz was a completely independent province under its Sharifs. During the second half of the seventeenth century the Ottoman influence had been extended by the occupation of Basra by Mustafa Pasha on behalf of the Ottoman Sultan Muhammed b. Ibrahim b. Ahmad, but the Hejaz was again out of the Ottoman influence. At this stage the Ottoman administration was troubled by the Muntafiq tribe in what is now Iraq, when they revolted against their authority in 1694.²⁴ At one time the Hasa had been under the control of the Ottoman Empire, but by the eighteenth century the only remaining evidence of Ottoman rule was the presence of few families of Turkish origin at al-Hofuf. However, at the close of the eighteenth century the Ottoman Empire administrated the whole of modern-day Iraq.²⁵

By the end of the eighteenth century, nearly all of central and eastern Arabia was mostly under the Al-Sa'ud influence. This appearance of the Saudis in Arabia persuaded the Ottoman Sultan to take action against Arabia. In 1811 the wali of Egypt, Muhammed Ali Pasha sent an expeditionary force to Hejaz, which expelled the

Wahhabis from Makkah and Madinah, and continued his advance into the heart of Arabia to capture the Wahhabi capital of Dir'iyah.²⁶ The action had demonstrated the Ottoman intention, which was based on ensuring secure communication routes to Egypt and good relations with the local people in Arabia. The wali tried to make a favourable impression on the Arabs by his aristocratic behaviour and by keeping all of his promises. In fact the Egyptians were not able to send large numbers of troops to Nejd, as they might face difficulties in returning back in the event of defeat. Despite this, the situation was not completely in favour of the Egyptians. In January 1818 Ibrahim's army occupied Shaqra, and moved towards Durma, where he massacred its people as a punishment for their resistance, and the road to al-Dir'iyah was now open.²⁷ In April 1818, Ibrahim Pasha had started his campaign against al-Dir'iyah, where the Wahhabis gathered with Al Sa'ud in the town to take part in the final battle. The strength of the Egyptian forces and their superior artillery enabled them to destroy the Al Sa'ud and the Wahhabi's defences and the town fell to the conquerors on 11th September 1818.²⁸

Following the Egyptian success, the British supported Ibrahim. Captain G.F. Sadlier of the 47th Regiment had been sent with a letter of congratulations to Ibrahim Pasha, and a proposal for joint action against the Gulf pirates. The suggestion was that Ibrahim should besiege Ras al-Khaima by land, and the British would attack it from the sea. The British also were seeking from the Imam of Muscat cooperation in this campaign, but they found Sayyid Sa'id strongly opposed to the proposal on account of Ibrahim's acts of cruelty against the Arabs.²⁹ The British aim of cooperation with the Egyptian troops hereby came to an end, and the expedition against the Qawasim was made under British supervision, when the British force landed in Ras al-Khaima in 1819 without any real trouble, with Sayyid Sa'id b. Sultan cooperating by accompanying the British fleet in his own ship.³⁰

In late 1819, the Egyptians decided to withdraw from Arabia, and Ibrahim Pasha evacuated most of his forces from Nejd and eastern Arabia, convinced that his father's (Muhammed 'Ali Pasha), aim was to control the Red Sea rather than central Arabia.³¹ In 1836, a large number of Egyptian troops was assembled at Madinah, and Faisal b. Turki Al Sa'ud was treated as a representative who would surrender his troops to the Egyptian General. Faisal refused the demand in the beginning, but finally he made a full submission. In fact this action was too late to avoid the Egyptian army which advanced towards Nejd, and entered into battle against the Wahhabis near Riyadh, resulting in the Egyptians soon becoming the masters of the country.³² As a result of this success on the part of the Egyptians, Colonel Campbell, the British Consul-General in Cairo, warned Muhammed 'Ali Pasha against any further extension of his position in the Gulf region and in Bahrain in particular. The British Government of India instructed Admiral Maitland, the Commander of the naval squadron in the Gulf to protect Bahrain Island in the event of danger.³³ The British Political Resident in the Persian Gulf had also protested against the Egyptian advance and took written assurances from the maritime chiefs of Oman that they would follow British advice and instructions, and above all resist to the last all attempts of Khurshid Pasha the Egyptian representative to control their affairs. The powerful British stance in this dispute, had its desired effect, and in May 1840 the Egyptian troops evacuated Nejd.³⁴

1.5. The Wahhabi's policy towards Oman

During the last part of Sayyid Sa'id's reign, the Wahhabi danger threatened Oman from the Nejd border, but the troubles from the Nejd remained insignificant compared with problems of local affairs which required consideration. The Wahhabi threats resulted chiefly from the difficulties through which the Wahhabi authority itself passed during this period.

The confirmation of the British authorities in India of lack of responsibility for the protection of Sayyid's internal territories had encouraged him to enter into a friendly understanding with the Wahhabi Amir. Consequently, an agreement was made in 1833 between Sayyid Sa'id and the Wahhabis under which the limits of direct government of the contracting powers were defined and Sayyid Sa'id agreed to pay \$MT 5,000 as a tribute to the Amir of the Nejd.³⁵ The settlement also stipulated that each party was obliged to provide support in suppressing rebellion in the territories of the other. This was considered imprudent by the British authorities, because of the hostile relations existing between the Wahhabis and Muhammed 'Ali Pasha of Egypt.³⁶

In early 1845, during Sayyid Sa'id's visit to East Africa the Amir of Nejd Faisal b. Turki had sent Sa'd b. Mutlaq, to move to al-Buraimi and capture Majis on the Omani coast and gain the neighbouring Arab tribes allegiance to the Wahhabis in the Nejd. Sa'd successfully achieved all this and accordingly demanded an immediate tribute of \$MT 20,000 and \$MT 5,000 annually thereafter. The British Political Resident in the Gulf advised Sayyid Thuwaini, the Imām's representative in Muscat, to accept the demands, and that \$MT 5,000 should be paid on account of Sohar, while the rest of the amount referred to Sayyid Sa'id.³⁷

However, this settlement was not enough to keep the Wahhabi threat away from the Omani territories. In 1852, another appearance of the Wahhabi force took place on the Omani border. 'Abdulla b. Faisal was the leader of this new threat to the entire Muscat territory, and in particular the Batinah coast, where the Imam had recently assured his authority in Sohar. Faisal took up his position at al-Buraimi, and as on previous occasions the Arab tribal chiefs offered him their allegiance and assistance.³⁸ The British Political Resident in the Gulf again appeared on the scene, and advised Sayyid Thuwaini to enter into negotiations with the Wahhabi leader. The result was that the Government of Muscat agreed to pay to the Wahhabi Amir an

annual amount of \$MT 12,000 besides arrears to the extent of \$MT 60,000, and the customary supply of provisions and food stuffs.³⁹ The Wahhabis now used their ability to enforce their influence in the area, and imposed tribute on the Sultan of Muscat, the Trucial Shaikhs of Oman and the tribes of al-Buraimi district to the Riyadh government. They also tried to convert these tribes to the Wahhabi doctrine and make them acknowledge the spiritual authority of the Wahhabi.

When Sayyid Thuwaini b. Sa'id took power in Muscat, the differences between the Sultan of Muscat and the Wahhabi representative Turki b. Ahmad al-Sudairi had arisen again, as the Wahhabi supported Sayyid 'Azzan b. Qais against the Sultan. Sultan Thuwaini then turned to the British for military support, which had not been confirmed as long as the Wahhabis were in terms of moral understanding with the British authorities in the region. Subsequently the British Political Resident Colonel Pelly offered his mediation in that dispute, and on 14th February 1865 the Resident announced to the Government of India his wish to visit the Amir of the Wahhabis in his capital Riyadh.⁴⁰ On his return from Riyadh, Pelly confirmed to the Government of Bombay that his visit had been satisfactorily concluded, and the relations between the Wahhabis and the British Government were now quite friendly.⁴¹

In August 1865, the Wahhabis had sent another mission to Muscat to collect the annual tribute which was paid by the Sultan of Muscat on the advice of the British Political Agent in Muscat, Colonel Disbrowe. The Wahhabis demanded an increased tribute, which was rejected by the Sultan. The Wahhabis then took measures to cause trouble to the Sultan by supporting a faction of part of the al-Sharqiyyah tribes to rise against him using al-Buraimi as a headquarters for their campaign in Oman. In the following dispute the Wahhabi Agent in al-Buraimi sent his brother on a military mission to Sur, where the British Indian subjects had been heavily affected and their losses was estimated at \$MT 27,700. On the advice of the Political Resident the

Sultan took action against the Wahhabi in al-Buraimi, which was clearly recognised to be the key to Wahhabis activity in Oman. To aid him in this Sultan Thuwaini was supplied with two guns and a large quantity of munitions to limit the Wahhabi influence in the oasis.⁴² At the same time further hostility by the Wahhabis against the Banian in Saham on the Batinah coast was initiated. The new aggression against the Hindus led the British Political Resident in the Gulf to issue an ultimatum to the Wahhabi Amir, which required a written apology and compensation for the hostilities in Sur and Saham, as well as assurances that no similar violence should be committed in future.⁴³ No reply to the ultimatum was received, and naval operations against the Wahhabis followed at Qatif and Dammam, and on 11th February 1866, H.M.S. *Highflyer* attacked Sur for its part in the affair of August 1865.⁴⁴

In consequence of this operation the Viceroy and the Governor-General in Council and the Government of Bombay were fully agreed and praised the good conduct of the officers and men of H.M.S. *Highflyer* describing their action as courageous.⁴⁵ Following the correspondence between the Government of Bombay and the Political Resident in this issue, the Resident had confirmed that all matters were satisfactorily taken care of, and confirmed that all Arab tribes round the Gulf were perfectly quiet and had complied with British desires.⁴⁶

The Wahhabi representative was murdered in al-Buraimi in April 1868, shot dead during a quarrel with the Shaikh of Sharjah. This ended the nineteenth century Wahhabi occupation of al-Buraimi as the tribes of the oasis asked the Imām of Muscat for help to expel the Wahhabi garrison from al-Buraimi's fort.⁴⁷ Imām 'Azzan marched to the Buraimi oasis in June 1869, and on the 18th of the same month the Wahhabi garrison surrendered the town's authority to Sayyid 'Azzan b. Qais and the Bani al-Na'im tribe.⁴⁸

The dispute over al-Buraimi brought the Shaikh of Abu Dhabi into the quarrel when the Shaikh's property rights in the district were assured by the British. This fact clearly demonstrated the considerable influence enjoyed by the Shaikh of Abu Dhabi in the oasis. The British were also in support of the Abu Dhabi Shaikh's claim to sovereignty over the oasis, and they confirmed his shared possession with the Sultan of Muscat, when they were both involved in the defence of the oasis forts.⁴⁹ Shaikh Zaid b. Khalifah had become the most influential and powerful of the Trucial Shaikhs after 1855. His rise to power had been helped by the death in 1866 of the great chief of the Qawasim of Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah, Shaikh Sultan b. Saqr al-Qasimi, who for fifty years previously had played a significant role in the Trucial Coast Shaikhdом policy.⁵⁰ In 1820 this policy was initiated by the British in the region when they concluded a general treaty to abstain from acts of piracy, and secured peace between them and the British Government. This treaty was followed by the signing of the Perpetual Treaty of Peace in 1853, which was very important for the formalisation of the British position on the Arabian Coast of the Persian Gulf.⁵¹ The British became responsible for the actual handling of the affairs of these principalities. From the early nineteenth century until the year 1858, all diplomatic and administrative problems in this region were channelled through the East India Company, and by the Government of Bombay until 1873, and then to the Government of India to the year 1947, when all these responsibilities were transferred to the Foreign Office in London.⁵² The British relations with Trucial Oman had become more workable and their influence was greatly increased after the conclusion of the Exclusive Agreement in 1892. The British influence increasingly penetrated the Trucial Coast, and became a factor of importance in any dispute arising between the Shaikhs and the external powers.⁵³

The relations between the Shaikh of Abū Dhabi and Sayyid Turki b. Sa'id were not always friendly. Although Shaikh Zaid b. Khalifah had visited Sultan Turki in 1871, the two leaders held opposing views on many issues. In particular, the

remaining years of Sultan Turki's time in power generally revealed unfriendly relations between Muscat and Abū Dhabi, especially in May 1887, when Sultan Turki gave his support to the Dhawahir of al-Buraimi who were at war with Shaikh Zaid b. Khalifah.⁵⁴

1.6. The Hinawis and Ghafiris and the general situation in Oman

The political division of the Omani tribes emerged as a result of the Civil War in Oman in the early eighteenth century on the death of the Imām Sultan b. Saif II in 1718 at al-Hazm. The unity which Oman had known since 1624, the date of the election of the first Ya'arabi Imām Nasir b. Murshid, came to an end and a period of civil war followed. The Ya'aribah era was for the most part one of internal peace and prosperity, during which the economy of Oman had improved and flourished, and also it was the era of the extraordinary development of Oman as a maritime power.⁵⁵ Oman under the Imam Sultan b. Saif II temporarily occupied Bahrain about 1717, and extended its authority along the Arabian Coast and south to the Kuria Muria Islands.⁵⁶

War had disturbed the Ya'aribah period, with a contest for the succession that frustrated the power of the Imam inside and outside the country, and gave birth to the Hinawi and the Ghafiri factions in Oman. The war had created two prominent leaders named Mohammed b. Nasir al-Ghafiri and Khalaf b. Mubarak al-Hinaie. The two leaders' supporters entered into a major war to re-establish the unity of Oman, and to reinstate a strong Imam in the country. In 1728 Muhammed b. Nasir was operating against Sohar, which had defied his authority, and Khalaf b. Mubark who was in Muscat marched towards Sohar to regain it from Muhammed. However, the final catastrophe occurred when the two leaders were killed in that conflict.⁵⁷ As a result of these events the Ghafiris held Nizwa, most of central Oman, the Zahirah and the Sharqiyyah district. The Hinawis held al-Rustaq, the Batinah coast and Jabrin fort.

Immediately Saif b. Sultan took over the Hinawis' territories including Muscat, and Bil'arab b. Himyar took the places held by the Ghafirīs.⁵⁸

In 1743, Imam Saif b. Sultan was struggling with the Persians who had occupied Muscat and Matrah, to gain control over the forts of the Jalali and the Mairani. He then left for al-Hazm fort where he died. At this stage no one in the Ya'rabi dynasty succeeded him, with Ahmed b. Sa'id the Wali of Sohar instead taking power. He too was fighting the Persians and had regained Sohar. His popularity encouraged the people in Oman to elect him as a new Imam of Oman and establish the Al Bū Sa'id dynasty. Ahmed worked effectively to exert further pressure upon the Persians and diverted the trade route from Muscat to Barka, and finally managed to end their activity in Oman and drive them out of Muscat and Matrah.⁵⁹

Sultan Turki's reign, Muscat and Matrah were considered the most important towns on the Omani coast. The British authorities agreed that stability in Oman and the safety of their interests largely depended on the security of these towns. Accordingly the British had never allowed any successful attack from the interior against Muscat and Matrah, and provided naval support to the Sultan, which enabled him to hold a strong position in the country.⁶⁰ Matrah and Muscat remained the Sultan's priority with respect to his strength in the country, and the British Political Agents in Muscat always approved the Sultan's request for any such help to secure his authority in Muscat and Matrah during times of danger. As Muscat was the capital where the central Government was conducting affairs in the rest of the Sultanate, the Sultan realised that without it, he could not exert his authority effectively in the country as a whole.

It known that Sultan Turki had extended his authority after 1875, to most of the towns in the interior and on the Batinah coast. The Sultan's position became more established after 1882, when his son Sayyid Faisal was appointed as his Wali at

Nizwa and its surrounding area with the help of the Hinawi faction there. Sohar was under the governorship of his son Sayyid Muhammed b. Turki, who ensured the Sultan's authority on the Batinah coast, despite the activity of Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais in the region. The rest of the Batinah towns were also under the Sultan's authority which was administrated by his Walis. Al-Buraimi had been indirectly under the Sultan's Government, when he agreed after the defeat of the Wahhabis to give the town and the Zahirah district to the Bani al-Na'im tribe, who remained loyal to the Government of Muscat. In al-Sharqiyyah the Sultan's influence was affected in Samad by the activity of Shaikh Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali al-Ḥarthi, who remained the Sultan's most powerful challenger in the province, and then became Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz's principal supporter. Ṣaliḥ had attacked Muscat and Matrah three times with the aim of overthrowing the Sultan in favour of Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais, but none of these attacks were successful as the Sultan enjoyed British support in protecting Muscat and Matrah. At this time the Sultan had only a Baluchi and Ḥadrami garrison, and had no strong military forces under his direct control. On the other hand the Sultan's naval force contained his steamer *al-Rahmani*, which he sold in Bombay at the end of 1877 for Rs. 10,000. In May 1878, Sayyid Barghash presented him with the *Dar al-Salaam* steamer which became the only ship in the Sultan's service.⁶¹

Sultan Turki basically established his authority with the Ghafiri tribes' assistance, which enabled him to maintain his position in the country. They were a reliable ally in the period when he attempted to regain Oman and during the troubles of his first ten years in power. The Sultan had switched to the Hinawi faction when he saw them as not only powerful enough to confirm his authority in the interior and to administer his position in Nizwa and Samāil, but also able to secure his possessions on the Batinah coast as well. These areas where the Hinawi had a fundamental influence were of particular strategic importance to the Sultan's Government.⁶² The Sultan used loyal tribes as his reliable forces on land and tried to organise them to

support his position in times of danger by using the Zanzibar subsidy and the trade with East Africa as a financial guarantee for their service.

1.7. Trade and Finance of the Sultan

The eventual dominance of the trade between Muscat and Zanzibar offered the Omani towns on the coast, like Sohar, Barka, Sur, Matrah and Muscat appropriate benefits. Consequently many Omani traders joined the Indian Ocean community of merchants. The trade took advantage of the monsoon winds that regularly blew from the northeast during the winter time, and then blew equally steadily from the southwest during the summer. Trade with East Africa had increased Omani wealth in previous centuries, and the rise of Zanzibar in the nineteenth century was largely attributed to the activity of the Omani merchant community. This came about as a result of challenges to their traditional Indian markets from wealthy British traders.⁶³

The campaign against the East African slave trade led to changes in traditional commercial activities with products such as ivory, textiles, oil and coffee gaining in importance. In fact Britain's intensified activities against slavery succeeded in challenging the Arab traders' domination of the market, as British policy was completely in favour of the suppression of the slave trade in the Indian Ocean. After the signature of the 1873 agreement with the Sultan of Muscat, the subsidy of Zanzibar was paid by the British without any real interruption.⁶⁴ The British slave trade policy had affected Muscat, and native shipping of all types clearing the port dropped steadily. The disappearance of the large sailing vessels between Zanzibar and Muscat was also influenced by the commercial dominance of steamers in the region and the Indian Ocean.⁶⁵ The economic state of the country faced great difficulties similar to those of the other Persian Gulf states in the following period because of the economic activity stimulated by the arrival of the steamers. Local ships did not have

the strength to deal with the new competition, and so the Omani economy was hard hit.⁶⁶

As a result of this situation the Sultan of Muscat's financial position was badly damaged and his income depleted, since he was dependent on the trade levies and the customs revenue. In fact the most important amount that the Sultan received was the Zanzibar subsidy, which forced him to remain loyal to the British policy towards Oman, and the revenue of Gwader of about £6000. The Sultan usually paid the money to the shaikhs of the tribes to keep them faithful to his government and to buy off his challengers, either those who were inside the country like Ṣālih b. 'Alī, Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais, and Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz, or those beyond his borders such as the Wahhabis.

Sultan Turki's financial difficulties had been one of the obstacles which had sometimes damaged his ability to rule the country. He faced a great challenge to his authority from various contenders, i.e. Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais, Sayyid Sālim b. Thuwaini and his brother Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz. Ibrahim was the main figure on the Batinah coast who never stopped his activities against the Sultan, and he regularly occupied main towns there like al-Masana'ah al-Khabourah and Sohar. The Sultan had always hoped that by wise concession he might be able to come to some favourable arrangement with Sayyid Ibrahim and those who supported him, but this never happened. Early in 1872, Ibrahim managed to conclude an alliance with Sayyid Sālim b. Thuwaini to overthrow Turki. This attempt was thwarted, however, as the British Political Agent supported all of Sultan's Turki allegations against them as they were disrupting the peace in the country. Sālim was operating in Ja'alan, then left for Gwader where he joined Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz in establishing a strong opposition to cross over to Oman in an attempt to remove the Sultan from power. In fact, because of British support for his government all of the Sultan opponents' activities were unsuccessful. His was the only central government in the region, and the people of

Oman were mostly in favour of his rule. Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz had been considered as a rebel to the official government in Oman, while Sālim was still regarded as the killer of his father.⁶⁷

However, the British authorities declared their opposition to all these attempts against the Sultan, as they realised that a settled situation in Oman would undoubtedly encourage British influence in Oman in the future. Sālim lost hope of obtaining British support when he was eventually sent to reside in India until his death from small-pox in 1876.

After 1875, 'Abd al-'Aziz and Ibrahim b. Qais remained active against the Sultan, Ibrahim in al-Batinah and 'Abd al-'Aziz between al-Sharqiyyah and the interior. Ibrahim's operations were always considered by the British to be hostile activities against their strategic interests and the safety of British Indian subjects. The two men were both powerful leaders and they had the ability to rule the country, but Sultan Turki was more able to control the situation in the Sultanate with British assistance which had always been provided where necessary.

The Sultan's troubles also came from the conservative tribes in the interior. After the election of Sayyid 'Azzan b. Qais by the 'ulema in 1868, as an Imām for his political ability, he emerged in Ibadi eyes as the only legitimate ruler in the nineteenth century. In fact, despite the election of the Imām, some Ghafiri tribes were opposed to his legitimacy, as they were influenced by the Wahhabis in this direction.⁶⁸ During the period of 'Azzan's Imāmate the Ibadi Hinawi tribes had been seen able to support Sayyid 'Azzan's government, and these tribes fought with the Imām to neutralise any threat to his power. The Imāmate of 'Azzan increasingly appeared to be the way of assuring the supremacy of certain powerful Hinawi conservative tribes rather than a way of achieving the goal of Omani unity.⁶⁹ When Sayyid Turki came to power in Oman the power of the conservative Ibadi tribes had not been seen as a threat to his

position, although they had sometimes gathered against him under the leadership of Shaikh Ṣaliḥ b. 'Alī al-Ḥarṭhi, or Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais at the time of their attack on Muscat and the Batinah coast. The rallying of the conservative tribes in the interior against the Sultan came about because of his open policy and his delicate situation towards the British authorities in the region. They also were in disagreement with him on the signing of the treaty of 1873 for the suppression of the slave trade, the expulsion of Sayyid Ibrahim from political life in Oman and his disregard towards the agreement between him and Shaikh al-Khalili after the occupation of Muscat in January 1871. In 1875 the Sultan's difficulties with the Ibadi Ghafiri, who had been replaced by the Hinawi tribes in some of the interior forts, re-emerged.⁷⁰

Generally the conservative tribes had seen that Sultan Turki's methods of governing the country did not concur with the way of the Imāmate. They considered the 'ulema to be the only ones who had the right to appoint the governor of the country, and they believed that their duty was to abandon the central government in Muscat if they could, and to fight against the Sultan if necessary. Despite these considerations, the idea of a Muscat-elected government never advanced beyond the speculative stage. As the conservatives were always in financial trouble, they were not able to collect and organise a large number of fighting troops, and because the British did not consult the conservative tribes about any change in Muscat's sovereignty, the conservative tribes were not likely to respect British designs on Muscat. On the whole, the Sultan remained beyond their influence, and as the Sultan was of the Al Bū Sa'id house and of good character, the conservative tribes eventually relaxed and accepted him.

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- ¹ R. O. 1867-1947, vol. vi, London; 1988, p. 297.
- ² Kelly, J. B., "Sultanate and Imamate in Oman", *Chatham House Memoranda: Royal Institute of International Affairs*, London; 1959, p. 8.
- ³ Risso, P., *Oman and Muscat, an Early Modern History*, London; 1986, pp. 149-50.
- ⁴ Coutrell, A. J. *The Persian Gulf States: A General Survey*, London; 1981, p. 70.
- ⁵ R.O. 1867-1947, vol. vi, pp. 307, 37-342.
- ⁶ Coutrell, 1981, pp. 113-14, and Marlowe, J., *The Persian Gulf in the Twentieth Century*, London; 1962, p. 17.
- ⁷ R.O., 1988, vol. i, pp. 65-66.
- ⁸ See chapter three in this study, pp. 30-33.
- ⁹ See chapter three in this study, pp. 27-28.
- ¹⁰ R.O. 1988, vol. i, p. 232.
- ¹¹ See chapter three in this study.
- ¹² This treaty was the second one to be achieved in this respect, as the first one was signed on 12st May 1835. See Hurewitz, J. C., *Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East*, vol. i, New Jersey; 1956, pp. 143-44. and Kelly, 1968, p. 840.
- ¹³ Kelly, 1968, p. 704
- ¹⁴ Lorimer, J. G. Compiler., *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, Oman and Central Arabia*, vol. i, Calcutta, 1915, pp. 694-95.
- ¹⁵ Landen, R.G., *Oman since 1856*, New Jersey; 1967, p. 80.
- ¹⁶ Ibid. p. 100.
- ¹⁷ Allen, C. H., "The Indian Merchant Community of Muscat", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, vol. xlv, (1981), p. 39.
- ¹⁸ Miles, S.B., *Countries and Tribes of the Persian Gulf*, London; 1919, p. 526. Allen, 1981, p. 39.
- ¹⁹ Allen, 1981, pp. 52-53.
- ²⁰ *Administration Report of the Persian Gulf Political Residency and Muscat Political Agency for the year, 1885-86*, vol. iii, p. 96.

²¹ *Administration Report of the Persian Gulf Residency, and Muscat Political Agency, for the year 84-85*, vol. iii, pp. 113-25.

²² Kelly, 1968, pp. 257-59.

²³ Gooch, G.P. and Temperley, H.W., (eds), *British Documents on the Origins of the war 1898-1914*, vol. i, London; 1927, pp. 209-12.

²⁴ Phillby, H.J., *Sa'udi Arabia*, London; 1955, pp. 11, 17, 27

²⁵ Kelly, 1968, pp. 31, 4.

²⁶ Wahhabism goes back to its founder Muhammed b. 'Abd al-Wahhab who was born in al-'Ayniah (1703-1787), central east region of Arabia in the Nejd. He learnt the Koran and religious subjects and the Arabic language from his father before the age of ten. In al-Madinah he was taught how to use weapons by one of his teachers, as he prepared himself for a revolution in Arabia for the Islamic faith. He visited Basra where he first condemned innovations which caused him to be driven out of the town. Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab began his activity in the Nejd in 1741, soon after his father's death, and from Huraimila he started his work on the doctrine. In 1745 Muhammed b. 'Abd al-Wahhab established an alliance with the religious leaders of Al Sa'ud. By 1812 the Wahhabis controlled most of the Arabian Peninsula, and extended their influence to north and south eastern Arabia. For more information see Troeller, G., *The Birth of Saudi Arabia*, London; 1976, pp. 13-14. Rentz, G., "Wahhabism and Saudi Arabia", *The Arabian Peninsula*, (ed), by Derek Hopwood, London; 1972, pp. 56-57. Kelly, J. B., *Arabia, the Gulf and the West*, London; 1980, pp. 225-26.

²⁷ Vassiliev, A., *The History of Saudi Arabia*, London; 1998, pp. 152-53.

²⁸ Ibid. p. 154.

²⁹ Hawley, D., *The Trucial States*, London; 1970, pp. 110-11.

³⁰ Ibid. pp. 112-13.

³¹ Vassiliev, 1998, p. 159.

³² Saldanha, J. A., *Precis of Nejd Affairs, 1804-1904*, Simla; 1904, p. 12.

³³ Vassiliev, 1998, p. 172.

³⁴ Saldanha, 1904, p. 12.

³⁵ Lorimer, 1915, p. 456.

³⁶ Ibid. p. 456.

³⁷ Lorimer, 1915, p. 457. Saldanha, 1904, p. 14.

³⁸ Ibid. p. 15.

³⁹ Ibid. pp. 15-19.

⁴⁰ Pelly, Lewis., "A visit to the Wahhabee Capital, Central Arabia", *G. J.* vol. 35, (1865), pp. 169-191.

⁴¹ Saldanha, 1904, pp. 19-20.

⁴² Lorimer, 1915, p. 474.

⁴³ I. O. R. R/15/6/4. *Report from Lt. Col. Pelly the British Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, to the Government of Bombay.* Dated Bushire, 13th September 1866.

⁴⁴ I. O. R. R/15/6/4. See the same report.

⁴⁵ I. O. R. R/15/6/4. *Letter from the Secretary to the Government of India to the Secretary to the Government of Bombay.* Dated 14th March 1866.

⁴⁶ I. O. R. R/15/6/4. *Letter from the British Political Resident in the Gulf, to the Government of Bombay.* Dated Bushire, 21st September 1866.

⁴⁷ Hawley, D., *The Trucial States*, London; 1970, p. 154.

⁴⁸ al-Buraimi became officially the base for Wahhabi's attack on Oman, and its strong fort was raised by their representatives many times during the nineteenth century. For the most part of the period between 1800-1869, the Buraimi oasis remained under the Sa'udi occupation. The fall of al-Buraimi into Sayyid 'Azzan hands in the middle of 1869 did not establish a strong appearance of his authority there, and his achievement was not recognised by the British authorities who in general declined to recognise him as a legitimate ruler of Muscat. In fact 'Azzan came to al-Buraimi on the invitation of the Bani al-Na'im tribe to support them in the action to drive out the Wahhabi's representative 'Abd al-Rahman al-Sudairi. The assistance of Sayyid 'Azzan was successful, and he agreed that it be administrated by the Bani al-Na'im tribe. Within the period between 1800-1952, there had been a total of five Wahhabis invasion of the oasis: 1800-1818; 1833-1839; 1845-1848; 1849-1850 and 1853-1869. When Sayyid Turki b. Sa'id came to power in Oman he agreed to renew a settlement with the Wahhabis including an annual allowance of \$MT 2,000 shared with the Shaikh of Abū Dhabi for the defence of his forts in al-Buraimi. Sultan Faisal b. Turki who replaced his father on the throne of Oman in 1888 tried to confirm his authority in the oasis, and he continued to appoint his Wali from the Bani al-Na'im tribe. Since the last appearance of the Wahhabis in al-Buraimi in 1869, they did not play any part in the oasis' history until their appearance again in 1952 under the command of Turki b. 'Utishan, which was for a short time only. In 1955 the British approved of the effective control, established by the Sultan of Muscat and the Shaikh of Abu Dhabi at al-Buraimi. See Kelly, J.B., "The Buraimi Oasis dispute", *International Affairs*, vol. 32, no. 3, (1956), p. 324. Albaharnah, H. S., *The Legal Status of the Arabian Gulf States*, London; 1968, pp. 220-225, 238. Phillips, W., *Oman A History*, London; 1967, pp. 164-66.

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- ⁴⁹ Phillips, 1967, p. 166.
- ⁵⁰ Kelly, J. B., *Eastern Arabian Frontiers*, London; 1964, p. 91.
- ⁵¹ Mackinnon, E.C.B., "Oman and the Trucial Coast", *Australian Quarterly*, vol. 30, pt. i, (1958), p. 73.
- ⁵² Abu-Hakima, A.M., "The Development of the Gulf States", *The Arabian Peninsula*, (ed) by Derek Hopwood, London; 1972, p. 49.
- ⁵³ Lorimer, 1915, p. 739.
- ⁵⁴ Ibid. p. 729.
- ⁵⁵ Hawley, D., *Oman, and its Renaissance*, London; 1977, p. 33.
- ⁵⁶ Lorimer, 1915, p. 403.
- ⁵⁷ Ibid. pp. 403-04.
- ⁵⁸ Hawely, 1977, p. 36.
- ⁵⁹ Ibid. 38.
- ⁶⁰ See chapters iii and iv in this study.
- ⁶¹ I.O.R. R/15/6/10. *Letter from Lt. Col. S.B. Miles, the Political Resident in Muscat to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf*. Dated Muscat, 30th May 1878.
- ⁶² R. O. 1867-1947, vol. ii, pp. 135-38.
- ⁶³ Landen, 1967, p. 83.
- ⁶⁴ I.O.R. L/P&S/569. *Letter from the Government of Bombay to the Government of India*. Dated 9th January 1874.
- ⁶⁵ Landen, 1967, pp. 83-99.
- ⁶⁶ Ibid. P. 101-16.
- ⁶⁷ Phillips, 1967, pp. 138-39.
- ⁶⁸ Wilkinson, J.C., *The Imamate tradition of Oman*, London; 1987, pp. 15-16.
- ⁶⁹ Landen, 1967, pp. 305-07.
- ⁷⁰ al-Hashimi, S.M., *Imam Salim b. Rashid and the Imamate Revival in Oman 1331/1913 - 1338-/1920*, Ph.D., Leeds University; 1994, pp. 35-36.

Sayyid Thuwaini's Rule in Oman 1856-1868

Any account of Sayyid Thuwaini bin Said's reign necessitates reference to the year of 1856 which began a new era in Omani political history with the death of Sayyid Sa'id bin Sultan.¹ On his death Sayyid Sa'id left a large number of surviving sons, many of them heavily interested in governing a part of the country, either in Oman or in Zanzibar. Among those who were very active figures in political developments were Sayyid Thuwaini, the eldest son of Sa'id bin Sultan, Sayyid Turki b. Sa'id and Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz b. Sa'id and Sayyid Majid and Sayyid Barghash in Zanzibar. Apart from Sayyid Turki and Barghash, they were not full brothers. The relationship between these brothers was based on jealousy, duplicity and animosity, which generally marked the communications between them. However, their birth affinity produced cordial understanding and intimacy from time to time, and this was notable between Turki and Thuwaini, especially during the time of the Wahhabi conflict with Sayyid Thuwaini. An amicable understanding was also sometimes apparent between Turki and Barghash during their reign.

On 23rd July, 1844, Sayyid Sa'id bin Sultan had written a letter to Lord Aberdeen, the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, informing him of his desire and decision to disinherit Hilal his eldest son, who died during Sayyid Sa'id's lifetime, and expressing his wish that another of his sons, Khalid, should succeed to the throne of Zanzibar; however, Sayyid Khalid also died during his father's life. In the same letter he pointed out to Lord Aberdeen that Sayyid Khalid would be in the line of succession to his African Dominions, while Sayyid Thuwaini bin Said would be the Sultan and Governor over all his Dominions and Possessions not only in Oman, but in Arabia and the Persian Coast as well, without any hint or mention of Turki's position.²

When the news of Sayyid Sa'id's death arrived in Muscat, Sayyid Thuwaini kept it secret from Sayyid Turki and his other brothers, until he had confirmed his position as successor to his father on the throne of Oman, by securing the certainty of allegiance from the leaders in the main towns in Oman. When this news reached Oman officially by the Zanzibar messenger to Muscat through Sur, Sayyid Turki bin Sa'id at that time had the position of Wali of Sohar, 230 kilometres north of Muscat. He left the town for Muscat with many of his people from Sohar for three days' mourning. He considered himself as ruler of Sohar in his own right, as his two brothers had done with regard to their possessions in Zanzibar and Muscat.³

Not long afterwards, Sayyid Thuwaini sent his messenger Mohammad bin Sālīm to Zanzibar seeking financial help from his brother Sayyid Majid, who was financially in a better situation than his brother in Oman. Thuwaini was facing great difficulties which were caused by Wahhabi demands for itawa money, or tribute to the Amir of the Wahhabis. Thuwaini had been asked for the sum of 20,000 Maria Theresa Dollars instead of the usual payment of \$MT 10,000.⁴ He was unable to afford this amount in addition to all his other commitments. Majid understood the matter, and he decided to send him \$MT 40,000, of which 10,000 would go to cover that annual payment. In doing this Majid was on the one hand trying to reach a satisfactory settlement of the dispute between Muscat and Zanzibar, and on the other hand trying to induce his brother Thuwaini to give him his share of the horses left by their father Sayyid Sa'id bin Sultan.⁵ Majid, on agreeing to pay Thuwaini that sum, had stipulated that \$MT 10,000 be paid to their brother Turki of Sohar. However, Majid realised that if Sayyid Thuwaini were ever to challenge Sayyid Majid's position in Zanzibar, a successful move would bring him not only increase in power and prestige, but more importantly, considerably more in terms of wealth. In 1860, the revenue of Zanzibar was \$MT 206,000, while that of Muscat was only \$MT 129,000, so it was important for Majid to buy off Thuwaini's hostility and to prevent him from

wishing to place the whole Empire under his own control. Promising him an annual payment of MT\$ 40,000 was a sensible decision.⁶

In consideration of this fact Brigadier W. M. Coghlan, the Political Resident at Aden, enclosed a letter in his report of 4 July 1860 to L.N. Anderson, the acting Chief Secretary to the Government of Bombay, in which he conveyed the British Political Agent in Zanzibar, Colonel Rigby's account of this transaction as follows:

" I am informed soon after the death of the late Imam... Sayyid Majid agreed to remit Sayyid Thuwaini the sum of 40,000 German crowns annually, of which sum 10,000 crowns were for the payment to the Wahhabees, 10,000 to their mutual brother Sayyid Toorki, who had been put in possession by their father, of the territories of Sohar, and the remaining sum 20,000 crowns were for Sayyid Thuwaini himself; but it was stipulated (conditional) on Sayyid Thuwaini refraining from hostilities with his brother Sayyid Toorki; and as Sayyid Thuwaini has broken this agreement, and undertaken hostilities against Sayyid Toorki, the money for the past year has not been remitted to Muscat."⁷

Although there were no official references to Sayyid Turki's claim on Sohar, which would have given Sayyid Thuwaini the full right to suppress the claim, any attempt to do so might have encouraged Sayyid Turki to establish an independent territory in the Batinah area. A discussion of this dispute will be given in a separate part of this chapter.

2.1. Thuwaini-Majid Dispute 1856-61

While Sayyid Thuwaini was engaged in preparing himself for military action against Zanzibar in order to unify it with Oman, Barghash b. Sa'id sought to turn the situation to his own advantage: he wished to rule Zanzibar by leading a group of Omanis against his brother Majid.⁸

The British action in regard to the succession dispute consisted of the military intervention by Rigby, when the Royal Navy succeeded in threatening the ambitions of Sayyid Barghash and as well as there of Sayyid Thuwaini who had plans to invade

Zanzibar. Fortunately for Majid, a British frigate was anchored off the East African coast very close to the Zanzibar isles to oppose any attack by the Omani rebels led by Sayyid Barghash and succeeded in crushing the rebellion on 16 October, 1859.⁹ Thus to oppose the ambitions of Sayyid Thuwaini and Sayyid Barghash it appeared clearly from the beginning of 1859 that the British authorities were generally in favour of upholding the late Sayyid's decision on the division of his dominions between his sons in Muscat and Zanzibar. Nevertheless, as late as 1861 when the Resident in Aden Coghlan was first appointed to his arbitration mission, the British were acting carefully in regard to the maintenance of the status quo, but it was clear nevertheless that the traditional unity between Oman and Zanzibar was now over, whether or not Sayyid Thuwaini was the best qualified son among the survivors of Sa'id's sons to assume authority over all the territories of Oman and Zanzibar.

In fact, General Rigby, the British Agent at Zanzibar did intervene, and given the reliance of the British authorities on his often biased view of the tide of local opinion in both Oman and Zanzibar, persuaded even officials like Coghlan who had been totally against this suggestion, to accept the idea of separating Muscat and Zanzibar. In regard to the succession to Sayyid Sa'id in Zanzibar, since the threat to Majid from his brother Barghash no longer existed, the way was more open for the British to settle the squabble between Muscat and East Africa on their terms.¹⁰

The claim of Sayyid Thuwaini to Zanzibar was encouraged by the recognition of him by shaikhs of the main Omani tribes who considered him as their Sultan. This, in his own and in their view, justified his claim to rule over all of Oman, including the territory which had long been a dependency of Oman i.e. Zanzibar.¹¹ Although the Zanzibar subsidy payment was agreed to be paid by Sayyid Majid difficulties appear to have arisen as to whether it was a tribute from a dependent part of Sayyid Sa'id bin Sultan's heritage to the main part of his dominions or a friendly contribution from a rich brother to a poor one. In fact the situation could have been interpreted either way,

the first from Sayyid Thuwaini's side, while the second one had been adopted by Sayyid Majid, as he held power in the richest part of the Empire.

2.2. Thuwaini's attempt to re-unite Zanzibar with Muscat

The seriousness of the trouble between Majid and Thuwaini became clear when the latter decided to invade Zanzibar and to re-join it to his possessions in Asia by force. In January 1859 the news had reached Zanzibar that a powerful fleet from Muscat was being prepared by Sayyid Thuwaini, and that the Sultan of Muscat was planning an invasion of Zanzibar. This was a cause for great alarm, and even apparently to have interrupted trade to and from East Africa. Many thousands of people gathered from various ports of Africa to resist the military campaign organised by Sultan Thuwaini.¹² The streets of Zanzibar were crowded with excited and enthusiastic armed men firing their old rifles in different directions to demonstrate their ability to stand against the force of the Arabs from Muscat. When the British Political Agent learned about the expedition, it became clear to him that Sayyid Thuwaini's plans to invade Zanzibar were actually being acted out, for Sayyid Thuwaini had many supporters in East Africa.¹³

On Friday, 11th February, 1859, Thuwaini set sail from Muscat with a force composed of the frigate *Caroline*, the large corvette *Curlew*, the brig *Rahmani*, and a troop ship. He had added to that nine Baghlahs carrying about 2,500 fighters from different tribes of Oman.¹⁴ On January 28th, 1859, Rigby wrote a letter to Captain Berkely, the Commander of the H.M.S. *Lynx* asking him to come to Zanzibar for the protection of British Indian subjects. On the 24th February, 1859, the Sultan of Zanzibar's warship *Shah Alum* with several hundred men, and 44 guns in very good condition and served by Turkish gunners, set sail.¹⁵ The rest of his fleet, *Piedmontese*, *Africa*, and *Artemis*, had on board 150 men drilled in the French style, which made them quite capable of confronting the Arabs of Muscat. In March

1859 one of the hostile Muscati dhows arrived in Zanzibar, where all of its men were at once imprisoned.¹⁶ The British authorities in India had been anxiously considering this situation and they sent urgent orders to Sayyid Thuwaini to dissuade him from carrying out his threat against Zanzibar.¹⁷ At the same time the marine cruiser *Assaye* was dispatched post-haste from Bombay to Zanzibar in answer to an urgent request of February 1859 in order to support Sayyid Majid and to protect the British Agent and subjects there. The steam-frigate had also brought information that the Muscat fleet for the invasion had been watched out at sea by a squadron from Bombay and had been invited under threat to return to Muscat.¹⁸ In fact the order to Sayyid Thuwaini to prevent him from carrying out these hostilities had not reached him in time.

Lord Elphinstone, the Governor of Bombay, acted quickly to catch the Muscati fleet proceeding to Zanzibar. On 11th February he sent his Military Secretary, Lieutenant-Colonel Russell, from Bombay on board the British steam frigate *Punjab* to catch up with Thuwaini to give him a letter. This requested him to return to Muscat, and to submit his differences with Majid to the mediation of the Indian Governor-General. Russell caught up with Sayyid Thuwaini and his main fleet off Ras al-Hadd near Sur about 368 kilometres south east of Muscat. On reading the letter he immediately agreed to return back to Muscat with his fleet, and to submit the differences with Sayyid Majid to arbitration. In addition, he sent a vessel after the Baghlahs which had already left for Zanzibar to re-call them.¹⁹ Sayyid Thuwaini had considered the internal situation in Oman unpromising for him to continue on that mission, and he desperately needed to be in Oman.

Sayyid Turki had received guns, ammunition and money from Majid to arise against Thuwaini. Sayyid Turki himself wrote to the Resident in the Persian Gulf, clearly admitting that he intended to work against his brother Thuwaini, and afterwards, he left Oman on a visit to Zanzibar to see Majid for the same purposes. At the same time the Wahhabis were creating serious trouble for Sayyid Thuwaini on his

northern borders. The dispute between Sayyid Turki and Sayyid Thuwaini will be discussed later in this chapter. Another point of trouble was the Persian demand for the renewal of the Bandar Abbas lease with the threat of revoking it. This meant that Sayyid Thuwaini was in a desperate financial situation and depended very much upon the money from Zanzibar, and his hopes rested on Majid's approval to pay him that subsidy.²⁰

With reference to this quarrel, France seems to have been slightly involved, and was accused by the British of giving secret support to Sayyid Thuwaini and also to Sayyid Barghash in his claim to the Zanzibar throne. The British authorities there had been naturally troubled by the French involvement, and they were obliged to act in their own interests, by not allowing any European power like France to work freely to impose her influence upon Majid or try to aggravate the existing situation between Oman and Zanzibar.

Indeed it was not long before French warships arrived at Zanzibar, and soon after that their Commander and the French Consul there met Sayyid Majid and discussed the situation with him. At that meeting they confirmed to him that Sayyid Barghash was under French protection, and should be treated respectfully. They also made clear to Majid the French objection to the British intervention and activities in the dispute between Muscat and Zanzibar.²¹

In April 1859 C.P. Rigby, Political Agent and Consul in Zanzibar, wrote a letter to Commander R. N. Jenkins, regarding his suspicion of French support for Sayyid Thuwaini proceeding to Zanzibar. He stated in his letter that the English and the American Governments had recognised Sayyid Majid as Sultan of Zanzibar soon after the death of Sayyid Sa'id bin Sultan but that the French Government had never taken any positive steps towards this.²² In fact, the French attitude and behaviour in both Oman and Zanzibar showed their uncertainty in this matter. This appeared clear

with the arrival of a French merchant vessel off the coast of Sohar, sent from Sayyid Majid with gunpowder and shot together with a sum of money to Sayyid Turki to encourage him to rebel against Thuwaini. However, on the arrival of the news of Sayyid Thuwaini's military expedition setting sail, the French Consul had not concealed his satisfaction and had openly abused Sayyid Majid in the foulest way. He said that not a shot would be fired in his favour, and that Sayyid Thuwaini would quietly land and assume the Government. He asked General Rigby about what his would be reaction on the arrival of Thuwaini in Zanzibar. The reply to that question entirely confirmed to him that the British attitude was in favour of supporting Majid's position over his own possessions in East Africa, and considered him as a properly constituted authority.²³ Not only that, but the British authorities at Zanzibar would call upon Sayyid Thuwaini and warn him that, if any British Indian subjects suffered injury to person or property, he would face the retribution of the British Government. The British authorities had also accused Sayyid Thuwaini of acting totally in response to the French desire to advance their aggressive intentions on the Zanzibar dominions, scheming to provoke a revolt and sending secret letters to the Arab chiefs at Zanzibar to induce them to do so.²⁴

2.3. The Arbitration of 1861

As we have already seen, the seriousness of the difficulties between Majid and Thuwaini had been closely followed by the British authorities, and both men were pressured by the Government of India to accept its settlement. However, the good relationship between Muscat and Zanzibar had deteriorated to the extent that its survival would not be accomplished without British mediation. Accordingly, during the years 1859-1860, the British became highly involved in that quarrel, and decided that a resolution of this problem was necessary and that it should be managed by them alone. The British influence over the ruling dynasties in Oman and Zanzibar, forced the two parties to accept the settlement the Indian Government was proposing.

Although Sayyid Thuwaini had accepted in principle the suggestion of arbitration by the Viceroy-General of India Lord Canning, he was extremely reluctant to commit himself to the Viceroy's decision. Nevertheless, he was eventually persuaded to accept the offer. In May 1860 a written statement was made by the British government of India appointing Brigadier-General W. M. Coghlan, the Resident at Aden, to investigate the claims of the dispute.²⁵ He was assisted by the Reverend George Percy Badger, a medical officer, Chaplain at Aden, and an accomplished Arabic scholar and historian, and Mr. Hormuzd Rassam, acting British Agent at Muscat.²⁶ The proceedings of the commission began their task by securing from each of the parties a formal bond for their agreement to the Viceroy's decision.²⁷ In fact the British authorities in Bombay had first gained a bond from Thuwaini, and they deputed to him in Muscat a Naval Officer, with political experience, Commander C.J. Cruttenden, Indian Navy, in September 1859. However, Cruttenden was not instructed to obtain identical written consent from Majid, which was obtained at the end of September, 1860, on the arrival of the Commission in Zanzibar to resume its official work which had started at Muscat.²⁸

The investigation began officially at Muscat on 12th June 1860. It spent nine days with Thuwaini enquiring into the situation.²⁹ At the end of his discussions in Muscat Coghlan submitted his first report dated 4th July 1860, written directly after his visit to Muscat and before visiting Zanzibar. In that report he pointed out that Sayyid Thuwaini had a good case, based on a strong claim as ruler of Oman as well as its dependencies in East Africa.³⁰ Thuwaini's opinion was strongly supported by Coghlan's colleague G.P. Badger who had made his own investigation into Omani history. He had been presented with a copy of Ibn Ruzayq's manuscript *al-Fath al-Mubin* by Sayyid Thuwaini in order to augment his knowledge of the history of Oman which might support the claim. He submitted all the information collected from his research to Coghlan. Coghlan concluded that, whatever the situation after the death of

Sa'id bin Sultan, the father's decision on the division of his dominions between his two sons should be acknowledged in full distinct and individual sovereignty for Muscat and Zanzibar.³¹ In July 1860, the commission headed by Brigadier-General Coghlan sailed from India to Zanzibar to continue the next episode of its investigations of the case, and arrived at Zanzibar at the close of September 1860, where it soon started its work questioning Majid on his claim to the sovereignty of Zanzibar.³² Majid based his demands to the sovereignty of Zanzibar on the following four facts:³³

1. Sayyid Said had divided the empire before his death into two separate powers, as he mentioned in his letter to Aberdeen, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
2. Majid had been elected ruler of Zanzibar and its territories by the Al Bū Sa'id residents and the rest of the inhabitants of the isle.
3. He had been recognised as ruler of Zanzibar by the foreign powers in particular Britain and America.
4. Thuwaini himself recognised Majid's authority over this province by authorising Muhammad bin Sālim's visit to Zanzibar to request financial support.

Although at first Coghlan found it hard to understand these reasons, he later came to support Rigby's encouragement of the division of the Sultanate. After reaching a conclusion on his views on this dispute between the two rulers in Muscat and Zanzibar, Coghlan issued the following edict:

" To sum up: considering the fact that the people of Zanzibar and its African dependencies did on the death of the late Syed Seed, elect his son Majid, to be their ruler in his stead; considering that the altered condition of these dependencies during the last half century fully entitled them to that privilege; considering that, if Syed Thoweynee elected Sovereign of the parent State, was justified in coercing them into submission, the people of the African dependencies, on the other hand were equally justified in resisting him; considering that it was very doubtful whether any such attempt on his part would have been successful, and considering the possibility that, if persisted by Syed

Thoweynee, the projected invasion of Zanzibar would have led to forfeiture of his supremacy over Oman, I arrived at the conclusion, on these grounds exclusively, that Syed Majid's claim to the sovereignty of Zanzibar and its African dependencies are superior to any which have been adduced in favour of Syed Thoweynee".³⁴

On the evidence of the Report, Lord Canning came to the decision in April 1861, to separate the African possessions of Sa'id b. Sultan from the Asian territories and to create a new and independent State of Zanzibar.³⁵ The result of this settlement was communicated to Sayyid Thuwaini in the letter sent to him from Canning on 2nd April 1861. Canning gave a very clear message to Sayyid Thuwaini that full consideration had been given to the issues, and the conclusion he had come to was as follows:³⁶

1. That Sayyid Majid had been declared the ruler of Zanzibar and the East African dominions of Sayyid Sa'id b. Sultan.
2. That the ruler of Zanzibar should pay the ruler of Muscat a subsidy of 40,000 Crowns annually .
3. That Sayyid Majid pay to Sayyid Thuwaini the arrears of the subsidy for two years, totalling 80,000 Crowns.

The continued annual payment of \$MT 40,000 to Muscat was not to be considered as implying the dependence of Zanzibar on Muscat, it was rather to be considered only because Zanzibar was eminently richer than Muscat. In the meantime, both parties had been asked for their written consent, to express their satisfaction at this award.³⁷ This annual subsidy was to continue from Zanzibar until 1871, when the British would make the payment themselves. It was paid from Bombay until 1947, when it became the responsibility of the Foreign Office in London until the year 1956.³⁸

Although Oman was never a British Colony or Protectorate, the British authorities decided to accommodate this permanent payment to Oman for nearly 85 years. By means of this financial assistance, the British were openly asserting their influence upon the Sultans of Oman and Zanzibar.

In confirmation of this fact, the Foreign Office in London wrote a letter to the British Ambassador in Berlin on January 14th 1885. This concerned the German intention to increase her appearance in Zanzibari waters by sending a German vessel of war to Zanzibar with the German Consul-General on board. In this letter the Foreign Office indicated as follows:

"For the greater part of the century the Sultans of Muscat and Zanzibar have been under the direct influence of this country and of the Government of India. Muscat and Zanzibar were divided into two Kingdoms under separate Sultans, an arrangement which still continues".³⁹

The British authorities clearly did not welcome any possible interference into the internal affairs of Oman and Zanzibar on the part of any foreign state.

2.4. 'Azzan's trouble with Sayyid Thuwaini

When Sayyid Thuwaini bin Sa'id became the ruler of Oman in April 1861 after Lord Canning's arbitration, he faced many challenges, one of which was prompted by Sayyid Qais bin 'Azzan and his son 'Azzan bin Qais of al-Rustaq.

Meanwhile, Sayyid Thuwaini's position in the interior of Oman had been weakened after the inhabitants of Nakhal, who were antagonistic to his rule, overwhelmed and killed his Wali, Sūwailim b. Sālmeen.⁴⁰ At the same time another revolt took place when the tribe of 'Yal Sa'd of Batinah, in a challenge to Thuwaini's authority, occupied the fort of al-Suwaiq. The Sultan gathered his troops and marched towards al-Maladdah, where the opposition was gathering. The fighting lasted for a

short time, after which 'Yal Sa'd agreed to hand over the fort to the Sultan, and submitted to his authority.⁴¹

Sayyid Qais bin 'Azzan had appeared a strong contestant to Sayyid Thuwaini's authority even in Muscat itself. Sayyid Qais b. 'Azzan remained disloyal to him until the latter's murder by Hilal bin Muhammad, Thuwaini's cousin from al-Suwaiq.⁴² About two years before the murder of Sultan Thuwaini, Sayyid Qais bin 'Azzan had been preparing to launch an attack against him in the capital to destroy his authority and to seize the government.⁴³ He communicated his plan to Hilal bin Muhammad, who was a prominent and influential person, and asked him to join him in that revolt but he strongly refused to do so and denounced this plot, showing his loyalty to his cousin Thuwaini.⁴⁴

After the death of Qais bin 'Azzan, his son 'Azzan continued the resistance against Sayyid Thuwaini's rule. By the end of 1864, 'Azzan had raised a revolt in Oman against the Sultan, who was at this time in possession of al-Rustaq castle. Sayyid 'Azzan managed to win the support of Ahmad al-Sudairi, who was in actual fact planning to establish a strong Wahhabi entitlement over the al-Buraimi oases and elsewhere in Oman.⁴⁵ Sultan Thuwaini was determined to crush him as he had earlier with his father Qais but he did not succeed in doing so. The Wahhabis stood behind 'Azzan, and their Naib at al-Buraimi sent a warning to Sayyid Thuwaini that 'Azzan enjoyed their protection, and that any attempt to destroy him, or even to cause him some harm, would bring a Wahhabi force down to Muscat.⁴⁶ Sayyid Thuwaini immediately sought British mediation to intervene in this trouble with them, and asked for assistance. Col. Lewis Pelly, the British Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, was instructed to investigate the situation and to submit a report on this matter.⁴⁷

2.5. Hostility and Harmony between Thuwaini and Turki

2.5.1. *Turki's challenge to Thuwaini*

The main cause of trouble at this time was the Sultan's brother Sayyid Turki bin Sa'id of Sohar. Sayyid Turki had been his father's wali at Sohar, as Thuwaini had been the Governor of Muscat, and Majid the Governor of Zanzibar. However, the situation after April 1861 had changed completely in Oman in favour of Sultan Thuwaini as he became the ruler of the whole country and its dependencies in Arabia. Nevertheless, Sayyid Turki had insisted on his claim to succession in Sohar, and he asserted the same independence as had many of the previous walis in Sohar at various times in the past.

In the summer of 1861, Sayyid Turki determined to set himself free from his brother's rule, and prepared himself to reject the Sultan's authority over Sohar. He declared the independence of Sohar and the district around the town.⁴⁸ The declaration was short-lived: the threat by Sultan Thuwaini to take action and to proceed personally forced Sayyid Turki to abandon his demands.

Indeed, Sayyid Turki's attempt were regarded as an extension to his activities during the dispute between Sayyid Thuwaini and Sayyid Majid. Sultan Thuwaini on his part did what he could to express his dissatisfaction with his youngest brother's behaviour in this regard. He asked his youngest brother to consider very carefully the difficulties which would arise from this state of affairs, but Sayyid Turki completely ignored the Sultan's suggestion.

Sayyid Turki carried his rejection so far, that he threatened Sultan Thuwaini that he would place Sohar and its dependencies under the Wahhabis' authority. Of course, he had no right to do so or even to create Sohar independently of Muscat.⁴⁹

No documentary evidence existed to support Sayyid Turki's claim. Colonel Hamerton, the British Political Consul in his letter to the Foreign Secretary, the Earl of Clarendon, G. William Frederick, on 10th November 1856, stated the following:

"I am fully aware that His Highness's (Syud Sa'id) intentions regarding the succession were, that Syud Thoweynee at Muscat should succeed to the Government of his Arabian possessions and that the prince Majid, who His Highness considered in the place of his deceased son Khalid, should succeed to the Government of his African possessions, provision being made for other of his sons as governors of various places in his African possessions".⁵⁰

So with regard to this quarrel, the above meant that Sayyid Turki was nothing more than a deputy with restricted powers from the sovereign Wali.⁵¹ In fact, Sayyid Turki had shown no interest in separating Sohar from Muscat at the beginning of Sultan Thuwaini's reign, but now he felt his pretension so justified that he was determined to free Sohar from Muscat's authority, even though such a outcome could not be legally maintained.

To this effect he disregarded the advice which had been given to him by the British authorities that he should consider himself thoroughly under his brother's sovereign power and join him in the interests of a united Oman.⁵² He felt that the maintenance of the status quo was no more than a continuation of the previous situation under his father's reign, when he had been paid only \$MT 120 per month. Sayyid Turki's attempts to form a coalition against Sayyid Thuwaini had more than once led to the suspension of the amount paid, and it had lately been withdrawn in consequence of the more direct action taken by Sayyid Turki which had damaged Sultan Thuwaini's influence.⁵³ Sayyid Thuwaini still remembered his brother's earlier bond, when in October 1858 Turki had written to Sayyid Thuwaini confirming his agreement to cooperate with him in the course of a series of disputes in Oman, and asking him for advice to deal with troubles at that time on the Batinah Coast and Zanzibar.⁵⁴



The foregoing considerations taken together provided, in the British Government's opinion, evidence which was decidedly adverse to Sayyid Turki's claim. Granting independence to Sohar could not satisfy these demands, and would also encourage Turki's resistance to Sayyid Thuwaini.⁵⁵

The British Government used their influence, confirming the Sultan's authority over the town and its district, and strengthening his power to secure it from foreign occupation. Moreover they insisted on opposing any other dispute which might alienate any part of Sayyid Thuwaini's dominions from his legitimate sovereignty. They totally rejected the separation of Sohar from Muscat under any circumstances, and Turki was only considered as a wali of the Sultan based at Sohar. The principal danger Thuwaini was concerned about was the temptation of Turki to follow Majid's lead and maintain his independence.

On May 13th 1861, the Indian Government wrote a letter to Sayyid Turki relating to this issue. It conveyed to him the British Government's decision not to accept this claim, and they sincerely hoped that he would act in accordance with the friendly advice provided to him by the Government of India. They advised him that his duty as well as his special interest was to obey his brother. They added that his involvement in this dispute would not help him, since persistence from his side in this claim was officially unsupported and they confirmed this information to his brother Thuwaini.⁵⁶

It was possible that on learning the decision of the Government of India, Sayyid Turki would submit himself to Sultan Thuwaini, but what worried him most was the uncertainty of his situation in spite of Thuwaini's promises to treat him kindly. Sayyid Turki's reaction to these assurances was to slow down the process, and to delay the transfer of authority to Sultan Thuwaini, probably because of the strength of feeling the the people of Sohar who were in favour of him.

2.5.2. *The British Agent's position in the dispute*

In May 1861, the Government of India had appointed their permanent representative in Muscat to contain the crisis, the Lieutenant W.M. Pongelley of the Royal Indian Navy.⁵⁷ Soon after his arrival he learnt that Sultan Thuwaini's preparations to attack Sohar were actively in progress in the harbour of Muscat on board his men-of-war. The Political Agent at Muscat entreated him before taking extreme measures to use all the means in his power to persuade his brother Turki to give up the governorship of Sohar in order to avoid conflict and public disunity. He stated that launching this attack would be a matter of concern to the Government of India, which rejected civil war or disorder in the Omani dominions.⁵⁸ In his reply to the Agency at Muscat, Thuwaini stated that all peaceful endeavours on his part had been useless, and fresh complaints of his brother's misgovernment were being made daily. He had at last come to the decision that he could no longer endure it but would, by using force of arms, compel Sayyid Turki to relinquish his claim to Sohar and swear allegiance to Thuwaini as sovereign of Oman.⁵⁹

Subsequently, in June 1861, Thuwaini decided to send five men-of-war, the Corvette *Rahmani* of 24 guns, the *Caroline* of 40 guns, the brig *Curlew* of 4 guns and two dhows, each with one gun.⁶⁰

The British authorities at Muscat were opposed to any attempt to detach Sohar from the Sultanate. Seeing that Sayyid Turki was showing inflexibility, the British Agent immediately wrote to the British Indian subjects at Sohar informing them of the situation and advising them to be ready to evacuate the town at a moment's notice.⁶¹ On 5th of June, 1861, Sayyid Turki wrote a letter to the British Political Agent at Muscat, W.M. Pongelley, in which he complained about the Agency's action in having advised the British subjects to leave the place, and asking for more time to be given before the Sultan marched towards Sohar.⁶² Although Sayyid Turki stated in

his letter that he felt happy at being placed under the dominion of Muscat and he would favour a visit to his brother at Muscat, Sayyid Thuwaini declined to accept this offer. Instead he remarked that any further delay on this question would be extremely dangerous and finally affect Sayyid Thuwaini power in the country.⁶³ The British authorities accused Sayyid Turki of not keeping his promises since he was repudiating their solution of replacing Sohar under Muscat sovereignty. The British Agent also warned him against launching any attack, which would cause trouble in Oman. Simultaneously, the British Agent agreed that Thuwaini should go ahead with his plan.⁶⁴

2.5.3. The British mediation in the dispute

In the meantime Lt. Pengelley offered to be a mediator between Thuwaini and Turki in this hostility. Sayyid Turki, in correspondence with the British Political Agent, finally accepted a request to meet Sultan Thuwaini on condition that the meeting be held outside Muscat. Pengelley then reported this development to Sultan Thuwaini, who declined to show any willingness to have any personal communication with Sayyid Turki or to hold any conference with him outside the capital, Muscat.⁶⁵

The British Agent at Muscat was disappointed by Sayyid Thuwaini's response as he had hoped that the brothers would meet and settle their differences peacefully. For this purpose Pengelley left Muscat for al-Seeb on the Omani coast 52 kilometres north of Muscat to make progress in encouraging the contesting parties to negotiate. He communicated directly with Sayyid Turki in Sohar asking him to visit al-Seeb where he was to discuss with him the present situation. Sayyid Turki in his reply regarding the invitation stated that he would willingly come to see him in Muscat as long as security could be provided. The Political Agent immediately promised to guarantee his safety while he was with him as well as for his return to Sohar.⁶⁶

However, when he met with Sayyid Turki the Agent declined to confirm his pledge of safety, and told him that it went quite beyond his authority. He also informed him that to keep this guarantee of safety intact, Sayyid Thuwaini should be informed about it. When Pengelley informed the Sultan about what he had already done, Thuwaini without hesitation said that any assurance that had been given by him should be considered as official, and would be treated in the same way as if coming from the Sultan himself.⁶⁷

Soon after the arrival of Sayyid Turki at al-Seeb on 4th July 1861, the British Political Agent contacted Sultan Thuwaini in the hope of his coming to al-Seeb. The Government of India were certainly very keen that this meeting should take place and should influence the outcome which would be made public in Oman, and to Turki himself however, to preserve the country from civil dissension. They would certainly be affected by Sayyid Turki's revolt in Sohar but there would be more difficulties if 'Azzan bin Qais of al-Rustaq pursued his demands. Despite this however, the British authorities in India were not completely in accordance with their Agent's activities in Muscat.

Sayyid Turki arrived on board a baghlah accompanied by about thirty armed followers. He had asked the British mediator to appeal on his behalf to the Sultan for forgiveness, and to convey his wish to resume friendly relations with Sultan Thuwaini. Pengelley, however, had not initiated this. On 5th July 1861, Sultan Thuwaini at last arrived at al-Seeb escorted by 200 cavalry to attend the meeting arranged with Sayyid Turki.⁶⁸ Lt. Pengelley, to avoid any misunderstanding between the two brothers, prepared to submit a written note to both parties with the aim of achieving a satisfactory result. His first note was sent to Turki, in which he warned him that, if he would not accept his view on this matter peacefully and refused to comply and try to resolve the situation, he should at once go back to Sohar. Sayyid Turki, feeling that his position was vulnerable, did not take offence at the tone of

Pengelley's note but agreed to his suggestions, and seemed ready to accept Sayyid Thuwaini's authority.⁶⁹ These assurances showed that Sayyid Turki was no longer interested in being in disagreement with his brother Thuwaini, and was in favour of the settlement, which he realised would certainly help stability in his country. On the other hand Sultan Thuwaini was now also ready to accept anything that his brother might wish to discuss with him without delay. He feared that as long as Sayyid Turki remained at Sohar he would never be a loyal subject and Sultan Thuwaini would suffer as long as he remained active.

2.5.4. *Thuwaini's action against Sohar*

While the arrangements for this conference were being made, Sayyid Turki suddenly changed his mind, and sent a message to the British mediator that he could not attend and prepared to sail off to Sohar during the night. Pengelley instantly informed him that as a consequence, the British efforts would cease, and Sultan Thuwaini was given the right to arrest him.⁷⁰ The British Political Agent considered Turki's behaviour to be against all his promises to him, and that he was no longer responsible for Sayyid Turki's protection. He also pointed out that from now onwards he would be treated no differently from any one of the Sultan's subjects. Sayyid Thuwaini took this opportunity to capture Sayyid Turki's Baghlah, and it was escorted to Muscat by two of the Sultan's armed dhows.⁷¹

With hindsight Lieutenant Pengelley's decision to withdraw his bond of protection for Sayyid Turki was probably a mistaken one. In response to Sayyid Turki's arrest and imprisonment in the fort of al-Jalali in Muscat, the people of Sohar revolted against the Sultan.⁷²

On July 9th 1861, Sultan Thuwaini despatched a fleet from Muscat consisting of *Rahmani*, *Curlaw*, and two other armed dhows, which had been made ready for this purpose previously with instructions to anchor off the Barka coast, 84 kilometres

north of Muscat waiting for him. He arrived at Barka on 12th July. The British Political Agent's attitude was clearly in favour of the Sultan's move. Instead of trying to resolve the situation, Pengelley immediately despatched a letter to the soldiers and inhabitants of Sohar, instructing them in the name of the British Government to refrain from becoming involved in this conflict or taking part in this rebellion. Furthermore he instructed them to submit to the authority represented by Sultan Thuwaini.⁷³

On 15th July 1861, Sultan Thuwaini boarded the corvette *Rahmani* with his Squadron and sailed towards Sohar in the afternoon. The naval expedition was heavily supported by a large number of armed men from Barka. On the arrival of these forces in Sohar, the town was absolutely deserted, for the inhabitants had fled into the interior of Oman.⁷⁴ Sultan Thuwaini soon gained possession of Sohar, and took command of the town without any notable resistance. The British Agent congratulated Sultan Thuwaini when he called at Barka on his way back to Muscat. Sultan Thuwaini informed Pengelley that he had appointed his eldest son Sayyid Sālim b. Thuwaini, about 22 years of age, the Wali of Sohar and its district.⁷⁵ He also informed him that he would be assisted by four experienced people: Saif bin Sulimān, Sayyid Ḥamad bin Aḥmad, Sayyid Ya'arub bin Khahtan, and Sayyid 'Alī bin Ṣalīḥ in the performance of his duties at Sohar.⁷⁶ In a letter dated 17th July 1861 to the Acting Secretary to the Government of Bombay, A. Kinloch, Pengelley mentioned that the Indian Government would have no objection to the letter despatched by him to Sultan Thuwaini, asking him to pay a monthly allowance to Sayyid Turki during his lifetime as long as he remained loyal to the administration. This was to be subsistence money ranging from \$MT 400 to 500.⁷⁷

Pengelley did not pass up the good opportunity of visiting Sohar after these developments so that he could make himself known to the new Wali Sayyid Sālim, and his advisors and give them his advice.⁷⁸ By doing so he was openly involved in the internal affairs of Oman and in a position to influence the course of events in

favour of Sayyid Thuwaini. However, he did not realise that this was beyond his official duties. He declared frankly that the authority of the newly appointed Wali was conditional on his conducting himself satisfactorily and remaining loyal to his father's administration, in which case all possible support would be afforded to him. On the other hand any attempt at any time to provoke conflicts or create alliances among the chiefs of the Omani tribes for the purpose of detaching Sohar or its district from Muscat would certainly give rise to the disapproval of the Government of India, which would without doubt stand behind the legal authority. ⁷⁹

On 26th August, the Agent at Muscat gave a full description of the situation in Sohar after the installation of Sayyid Sālim. There were scarcely 500 inhabitants remaining in the whole town, but as confidence was growing among the people they were returning to the town from various places and former daily life was being resumed.⁸⁰ Houses had been destroyed and many of the date palms damaged by fire. The British Political Agent spent some time in ascertaining the legality of certain claims amounting to \$MT 2,706 against Sayyid Turki by the Banians who resided in Sohar. These claims had been admitted by Sayyid Turki, who sent a draft for the requested amount to his brother in Zanzibar through the British Agency, which despatched it immediately to the British Consul and Agent at Zanzibar to hand it over to Sultan Majid.⁸¹

2.6. The Government of Bombay's reaction to Pengelley's actions

At this stage Lt. Pengelley had gone beyond the interests of the Government of Bombay. First of all, the involvement of Pengelley in the capture of Sayyid Turki presented them with real anxiety, as he had exceeded his duties as British Agent. They accepted his involvement as a mediator in the crisis but asked him not to misuse his authority in favour of one side and against the other. He was told sharply that:

"While we recognise the advantages resulting from a termination having been put for the present to the rebellious conduct of the chief

of Sohar without war, which would have involved several tribes on either side in hostilities, we cannot altogether approve of the part taken by him in those preliminaries which led to the capture of Syud Toorkee".⁸²

If Sayyid Turki's refusal to attend the meeting had been a rejection of the Sultan's authority, Lt. Pengelley should then have left the Sultan to settle the dispute by himself at Sohar with his own troops. The Government of Bombay also told Pengelley that it was not his duty to allow his personal desire to influence the outcome of the dispute by escorting the Sultan's ships to Sohar in the British warship *Elphinstone*.⁸³ He had been accused of being too impatient in dealing with such a serious issue, when Sayyid Turki had asked him to postpone the meeting to the following day, and he had immediately withdrawn his protection. It was felt this action would jeopardise British status among the Arab tribes of Oman, and British promises would in the future be taken lightly.⁸⁴ The British Government in India expected that this matter would be brought effectively to conciliation, with the assistance of the British representative's friendly mediation to delay the meeting by a day, but they were surprised at Sayyid Turki being captured at the appointed place of meeting, and being taken to the al-Jalali Prison at Muscat. Subsequently, the Government of Bombay made it clear that any removal of Sayyid Turki to Zanzibar at the desire of Sultan Thuwaini would not be approved unless Turki and Sayyid Majid agreed to this request.⁸⁵

The British Political Agent's reputation at Muscat had been severely damaged, and the Bombay authorities finally reached the decision to relieve him of his duties by terminating his employment as Political Agent at Muscat, this was to take effect as soon as they could find the right person to occupy the position.⁸⁶

On 5th October 1861, A. Kinloch Forbes, the Acting Secretary to the Government of Bombay, was instructed to address a letter to Pengelley, with remarks on his mishandling of his duties as British Agent at Muscat.⁸⁷ He requested him to

inform the Sultan that the Government of Bombay were unable to congratulate him on the means which he had employed to obtain peace, and the Governor in Council desired that he should make it clear to the Sultan that any such misuse of British friendship would probably lead to the withdrawal of the British Agency from Muscat.⁸⁸ Sultan Thuwaini was ordered to set Sayyid Turki free and to abandon any idea he had to deport him from Oman, and was instructed to pay him an allowance. Sultan Thuwaini found himself in a position where he had no choice but to follow this order. Sayyid Turki was freed in February 1862, the month in which the new British Political Agent Major Malcolm Green, who replaced Senior Lt. Pengelley, took up his post at Muscat.⁸⁹ Relations between Sultan Thuwaini and Sayyid Turki improved and they were perfectly reconciled after the arrival of the new Political Agent at Muscat, who granted a monthly allowance to Sayyid Turki. He remained loyal and close to his brother for the rest of his life, and very helpful in his plans to conciliate his position in the country. In early 1866, he planned to accompany Sultan Thuwaini on his expedition to Sohar against the Wahhabis, but this was aborted at the outset because of the murder of Sultan Thuwaini by his son Sālim.⁹⁰ Sayyid Turki might well have shared the same fate, had the decision not been taken to place him in leg irons in the fort of Sohar.

2.7. The principal British interests in Thuwaini's Reign

Sayyid Turki's reconciliation with Sultan Thuwaini created a great opportunity for the latter to settle the internal and the external problems facing Oman. The Bombay Government were encouraged to establish a more permanent presence in Muscat taking advantage of communication facilities there. In January 1861, Lt. Colonel Herbert Frederick Disbrowe was appointed Consul, initiating a new era in Anglo-Omani relations. The British hoped to achieve great authority in their position in Muscat.⁹¹ During 1859, Britain had installed a cable line from Aden to Karachi, about 1685 miles, and the Omani territories served as relay stations for the work,

notably at the Kuria Muria group of islands and at Muscat itself.⁹² This significant step forward in Anglo-Omani relations proved to be mutually beneficial. This was especially the case during the period of the dispute which followed the death of the Imām, Sayyid Sa'id bin Sultan. The British instituted their mail service from India to Muscat at this time.⁹³

After 1861, the British position in Oman improved rapidly, since Sultan Thuwaini desired to keep the links between the two nations very close. Certainly he realised during his troubles with Sayyid Turki that peaceful government could not be achieved in Oman without British support or at the very least British approval. On November 17th 1864, Lt. Col. Lewis Pelly, the British Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, and his colleague Lt. Col. Disbrowe, Her Britannic Majesty's Political Agent at Muscat, had signed on behalf of the British Government the agreement to lay down a cable system with Sultan Thuwaini at Barka, in the presence of Minister Hajee Ahmad.⁹⁴ The treaty gave the British authorities the liberty to construct additional lines of telegraphic communication in the future anywhere on Omani lands and territories. On 19th January 1865, the previous treaty was extended by another one, which contained six more explanatory articles, confirming British rights and adding more telegraphic lines on the territories subject to the Sultan's authority. It also stipulated that Sultan Thuwaini should be responsible for affording protection to these lines to the best of his ability, while the British authorities should pay the cost for the labour requirements and the materials.⁹⁵ At this point British political interest in Oman appeared clear, and the arrangement demonstrated British intentions to control Omani affairs during the following decades.

2.8. The Sālim-Turki dispute during Sālim's Reign

As described above Sayyid Sālim had detained his uncle in Sohar at the time of Thuwaini's murder. Sālim then left Sohar for Muscat, while keeping Sayyid Turki in

custody at the fort in the town. He arrived in Muscat the next day, where he declared himself the new Sultan to the Omani shaikhs who were gathering from various places in Oman, and informed them that his father had died from illness, promising justice and prosperity which he claimed had not existed during his father's reign.⁹⁶ He intended by this announcement to ensure good relations between him and the Omani tribal shaikhs who at this stage had unrestricted influence upon the interior affairs of Oman which were not yet under central control. His financial difficulties also played a role in this move as Sayyid Majid had protested against Sālim's claim to the Zanzibar subsidy, arguing that the previous agreement for this payment was nothing more than a personal understanding between him and his brother Sultan Thuwaini, and Sālim as the killer of his father could not legally succeed him.⁹⁷ In fact Majid's protests were not kept up for long, as soon after the British recognition of Sayyid Sālim as Sultan of Muscat Majid was forced to continue his payment to Muscat, but through the medium of the British representative at Muscat.

Lt. Colonel Lewis Pelly, the British Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, had just left the country before this change had taken place, heading for Bushire. He was in Khor-Sham in the north of Oman when he received the news of the death of Sayyid Thuwaini. He immediately left for Muscat on board his steamer *Berenice*, the Bombay Government having instructed him to abstain from recognition of Sayyid Sālim for the time being. On his way down to Muscat, he called at Sohar where he secured the release of Sayyid Turki and set him free.⁹⁸ At Muscat, Lt. Col. Pelly had communicated with Sālim and informed him that the British Government would not recognise him as Sultan of Muscat, and that they regarded him as a parricide. The Resident then received intimation that Sayyid Sālim, with the support of his followers, would attack his ship and intended to kill all on board. The *Berenice* was unarmed, so Pelly decided to leave the harbour during the night when Salim intended to attack.⁹⁹

In connection with this matter the Secretary of the Government of India had written to the Secretary of the Government of Bombay submitting the Government of Bombay's views on the position to be taken towards Sayyid Sālim at Muscat. He also confirmed to him that Lt. Col. Pelly had rescued Sayyid Turki and set him free, and removed the British subjects with their property from Muscat, and all these actions had already been approved by the Government of India.¹⁰⁰

Subsequently, the British authorities in the Persian Gulf found themselves in the untenable position of not offering recognition to any legal Government in Oman, since otherwise they would find themselves embroiled in an endless conflict between the pretenders to the throne. Sayyid Sālim himself had sent his envoys Nasir bin 'Ali, and Ḥamad bin Sa'id bin Khalfan, to the Government of India to complain about the British Resident's attitude towards the events in Oman and to gain their recognition.¹⁰¹

Four months later, Colonel Pelly arrived in Muscat, having been asked by Sayyid Sālim to pay him a visit of condolence on the death of his father. In fact Pelly did not accept this invitation at once, explaining that he had been instructed not to do so but, if Sālim desired to refer to the question of his recognition, his duty was to do so. Sālim recognised that the Political Resident had prepared himself to announce his recognition. On 10th September 1866, Colonel Pelly satisfied him when he stated that Sayyid Sālim was the Sultan of Oman, and the British flag was soon hoisted at the consulate in Muscat.¹⁰² He stayed for one week at Muscat, before he left for Bushire, where he sent a letter to the Secretary to the Government of Bombay declaring that all matters in Muscat were satisfactorily settled, and that all the Arab tribes in the Gulf were perfectly peaceful and showing a conciliatory disposition, and saying that force could possibly be used in the event of trouble there.¹⁰³

By this time Sayyid Turki had been expelled to Bushire. From there he moved to Bandar Abbas, where he sailed off to the Trucial Coast, seeking the Arab Shaikhs' assistance on the Arabian side of the Gulf to overthrow Sālim. They showed their desire to afford him the support he deserved but these efforts failed when the British authorities in the Gulf cautioned the Shaikhs against giving any aid to Sayyid Turki's plan, especially by sea, as it would contravene the Maritime Peace Treaty of 1853.¹⁰⁴ Sayyid Turki then left the Trucial Coast and proceeded towards Oman itself with the aim of inciting a revolt against his nephew from inside the country. When he arrived there his first task was to set up his headquarters at Yanqul, 324 kilometres north west of Muscat, in al-Zahirah district. He obtained support there from the Shaikhs of the tribes, especially the Shaikh of the 'Alawi tribe, and marched down to regain Sohar, where he achieved a quick victory by taking the town from the Sultan's wali. He was however, unable to hold it after his main supporter, the 'Alawi Shaikh, was killed, and his men then retreated to al-Zahirah leaving the battlefield to Sayyid Turki and a small number of his followers.¹⁰⁵

Sayyid Sālim's position in Oman had been seriously challenged by Sayyid Turki during the year 1867, and his authority was not secured even after the British consented to his taking power. There was only one way for Sayyid Sālim to keep Sayyid Turki's activities permanently under control, which was to turn to the British for support and request them to punish him for violating the Maritime Peace Treaty. Sayyid Turki strongly believed that he had the right to claim the throne of Oman instead of Sayyid Sālim, who was only the grandson of Sayyid Sa'id the founder of the nation.

After the defeat of Sayyid Sālim at Sohar, Sayyid Turki proceeded to al-Sharqiyyah district, where he joined with the tribes of Bani Bū Hasan, al-Hajriyyin, al-Hirh, and al-Wahibah, who encouraged him to mount an immediate attack on Muscat, headed by Shaikh Sa'id bin 'Ali bin Mas'ud al-Barwani, and Ḥamad bin

Musallam the Shaikh of Bani Bū Hasan.¹⁰⁶ On this occasion Sayyid Sālim bin Thuwaini had managed to collect about 2500 followers from the al-Batina coast tribes to stand with him against Sayyid Turki's coalition of al-Sharqiyya tribes; however, about half of them soon deserted him, as a result of disrespectful treatment on his part.¹⁰⁷ When this matter had reached its peak Shaikh Ṣaliḥ bin 'Ali al-Ḥarthi, the *tamimah* of all the al-Ḥarthi tribes, decided to interfere in this dispute as a mediator, asking Shaikh Ḥamad bin Musallam, the paramount leader of Turki's troops, to refrain from continuing the expedition to attack Muscat. He requested Sayyid Turki too, to wait at Bediyyah 266 kilometres south west of Muscat, while he went to Muscat intending to bring these hostilities to an end by a settlement with Sayyid Sālim.¹⁰⁸ When he arrived there, he was told through the British Agent that any change in the recent situation, or support to Sayyid Turki, would be contrary to the interests of the British authorities. He could have achieved this settlement, if Sayyid Turki had not carried out his attack on the capital. Muscat at that time was full of alarm about the news of Sayyid Turki's intention to attack.¹⁰⁹ The British Agent at Muscat, Captain George Atkinson, was so worried, that he sent a telegram to the Bombay Government recommending them to warn Sayyid Turki officially not to attack Muscat, or any of the sea towns on the Omani coast; this suggestion was accepted by the Government of India.¹¹⁰

Sayyid Turki's party did not listen to Ṣaliḥ bin 'Ali's advice to wait, and resumed their advance towards Muscat in the middle of August 1867.¹¹¹ On the 27th of that month, Turki's troops arrived at Bidbid only 56 kilometres from Muscat. Although Sayyid Sālim had rejected the request of Ṣaliḥ bin 'Ali to concede the Sohar principality to Sayyid Turki, he assured him that in order to compromise on this matter he would allow Sayyid Turki a monthly salary of \$MT 200 and a residence at Muscat. The envoy seemed to be satisfied with Sayyid Sālim's proposal, and managed to

convert some to his side, but temporarily at least alienated others from Sayyid Turki's cause.¹¹²

The British officials at Muscat were uncertain about whether to take action against Sayyid Turki, but they were prepared to accept some kind of negotiated settlement between the two sides over the Sultanate of Oman. Despite this, however, they made it clear to Sayyid Turki that, even if he succeeded in his long standing campaign the British authorities would not be able to recognise his achievement, and that any place he might obtain possession of would come under naval bombardment.¹¹³ On the night of 30th August 1867, Sayyid Turki, encouraged by growing support, attacked Matrah and took it by surprise, shortly after the envoy of Ṣaliḥ b. 'Alī had reached an agreement with Sayyid Sālim who had been accepted as the country's rightful leader. On 4th September Turki captured all roads to Muscat, but Sālim was soon able to force him to retreat to Matrah on the sixth of the same month with about 500 of his fighters.¹¹⁴

On 9th September 1867, Lt. Col. Lewis Pelly arrived at Matrah harbour from Bushire on board the mail steamer *May Frere* followed by H. M. S. *Octavia* from Bombay. Soon afterwards Pelly sent a note to Sayyid Turki threatening him with bombardment of Matrah, if he refused to comply with British requests and give up his demands.¹¹⁵ Shortly after receiving that caution, Sayyid Turki's envoys boarded the steamer *May Frere* acknowledging that their Sayyid had fully abandoned his demands for territory and would be satisfied with a pension equivalent to the revenues of Matrah and Sohar.¹¹⁶ The agreement on this matter was completed, and it was stipulated that Sālim should make a monthly payment to Sayyid Turki, while the latter should leave the country to India under British supervision. Sayyid Sālim agreed to the agreement entered into by Lewis Pelly and Captain Atkinson, the British Political Agent at Muscat at the time (whose reputation was enhanced by conflicts in Oman) of a monthly payment to his uncle of \$MT 600, while the latter agreed to reside in British

India.¹¹⁷ This settlement had been confirmed in writing in the letter by the Government of Bombay to the Governor in Council, Bombay, from the Secretary to the Government of India Political Department number 94, of 23rd November 1867. In this they stated that Sayyid Turki had no option but to submit to the settlement or face the threat of force of arms and bombardment in the event of his expelling Sayyid Sālim from Muscat or occupying any town on the coast.¹¹⁸ This threat appears to have been made under a direct instruction from the Government of India. On 11th September 1867, Sayyid Turki left Oman for India on board the British frigate *Octavia*.¹¹⁹

Sayyid Turki had no doubt realised that establishing good relations with British officials would reap its benefit in the future. At the time he could not deny that but for their recent help, if the situation had been left under Sayyid Sālim's jurisdiction he might still be in detention following the death of his brother Sultan Thuwaini. Equally he had remained very popular with the Omani tribal Shaikhs like Ḥamad bin Musallam, which created a solid ground for him in Oman which he thought might be ready to accept him as the head of state one day in the future.

During the following period of Omani history, Sayyid Sālim faced a much more complicated situation and strong opposition from Sayyid 'Azzan bin Qais, whose demands were concentrated on the establishment of the Imāmate in Oman. He was supported mainly by the 'ulema of Oman who had a strong influence upon a large part of the Omani population. Sālim's struggle with 'Azzan did not last long, for he became unable to hold his position as ruler for more than one year after the exile of Sayyid Turki. Sayyid Sālim was faced by the same fate that Sayyid Turki had faced before, when Sayyid 'Azzan bin Qais managed to expel him to Bandar Abbas, where he sought asylum on board H.M.S. *Vigilant* on October 12th 1868. Sayyid Sālim had been the Sultan of Oman for approximately two years, when Sayyid 'Azzan unexpectedly emerged from al-Rustaq with a great number of troops. He took the

main towns such as Barka, then Matrah and finally Muscat on 1st October, 1868, into his possession opening a new phase of conflict in Omani political history, a phase which would bring Sayyid Turki back into the theatre of events.

¹ Sayyid Sa'id died on board his ship *Victoria*, during its journey from Muscat to Zanzibar, on October 19 1856, off the coast of the Seychelles, Island Coast, when he was 65 years old, and he was buried in the garden of his palace in Zanzibar on the sixth day after his death. See Ibn Ruzayq. *al-Fath al-Mubin*. Muscat; 1977, p. 460, and Badger, G. P. *History of the Imam and Seyyids of Oman*. London; 1986, pp. 259-260.

² Bhacker, M. R. "Family Strife and Foreign Intervention". *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*. vol. liv, (1991), p. 276.

³ Kelly, J. B., *Britain and the Persian Gulf 1795-1880*. London; 1968, p. 534. Baily, R. W. (ed). 1988, *Records of Oman 1867-1947*. vol. i. p. 65.

⁴ The Maria Theresa Dollar was the only valid coin in the land, a silver coin originally minted in Austria but later copied extensively for use in the Arabian Peninsula, North Africa, and various parts of the Middle East. The date of the issue of this coin goes back to the year 1751 when the Empress of Austria issued it for use in her colonial empire. The issue of 1933 was the first since 1783, except for a short period during the First World War, in which the Austrian mint had struck some of these coins for service. This coin had been permitted to be struck by the Royal Mint in Britain in the year 1936, which issued the sum of 150,000, and more in 1938. In 1949, 500,000 coins were minted in the order of British banking houses. The coin attained such wide popularity over the world among peoples and countries after the Empress's death in 1780, that this was the only currency they would accept. It remained in circulation and in Oman until 1970, when it was replaced by the national currency, the Rial, (over a large area of Africa and the Middle East after the Second World War). £1 equalled about 4 \$MT until 1935. See Crofton, R. H., *Zanzibar Affairs 1914-1933*. London, 1953, pp. 72-73, and Peterson, J. E., *Oman in the Twentieth Century*. London, 1978, p. 25.

⁵ For more explanation see; Baily 1988. vol. 1, p.65. and Kelly, 1968, p. 539.

⁶ Coupland, R., *The Exploitation of East Africa 1856-1890*. London; 1968, p. 15.

⁷ *Parliamentary Papers*. vol. xii, Letter No. 19, of 1856, on the Coghlan Report to Anderson; Sect. Dept; No. 10, of 1860.

⁸ Bhacker, M.R. "Family Strife and foreign intervention: caused in the Separation of Zanzibar from Oman ...". *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*. vol. liv, 1991, pp. 277-78.

⁹ Ibid. p. 287.

¹⁰ Ibid. p. 278.

¹¹ Baily, 1988, vol. i, pp. 65-66.

¹² The title of Sultan would appear to have been first used by Vincenzo Maurizi (Shaikh Mansur) in his book published in London, 1819. In his explanation of this issue he said: "I have always styled the Sovereign of Muscat Sultan, as his subjects universally give him that title; the application of Himam (Imam) never having been used by them since the time of Sayyid Said's Grandfather". Badger, on the other

hand, says more accurately, "Although the name Sultan is common enough in the country it has never been used as a title by the ruling sovereigns. Formally they were Imams, now they are simply Sayyids..." The title of Sultan was first used officially in 1839, after the Anglo-Omani commercial Treaty of 31 May, 1839, in all whose Articles the title of Sultan clearly appeared, at the suggestion of Palmerston. On the separation of Muscat from Zanzibar in April 1861, Bombay decided that each of their rulers should in future be styled Sultan, a designation by which, from this time on, they should be generally described. See Badger, G.P., *History of the Imam and Sayyids*. London; 1871, pp. 373-81. Tuson, P. and Quick, E., *Arabian Treaties 1600-1960* part 3. Oman and Yemen. London; 1992, pp. 40-46. Kelly, J. B., *Britain and the Persian Gulf 1795-1880*. London, 1968, pp. 11-12. Heard-bey, F. "The Gulf States and Oman in Transition", *Asian Affairs*. vol. lix, 1972, pp. 17-18. Lorimer, J. G., *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, Oman and Central Arabia*. vol. i, Calcutta; 1915, p. 471.

¹³ See Russell, C. E. B., *General Rigby, Zanzibar and the Slave Trade*. London; 1935, pp. 78-80, and Coupland, R., *The Exploitation of East Africa 1856-1890*. London; 1968, pp. 18-20.

¹⁴ *Records of Oman 1867-1947*. vol. i, p. 66. Russell, Charles E. B., *General Rigby, Zanzibar and the Slave Trade*. London; 1935, pp. 78-79.

¹⁵ R.O. p. 79.

¹⁶ A dhow is an Arabic sailing vessel used for trade in the Indian Ocean, by the Omanis and the Arabs of the Peninsula, usually with one large mast, but it can be seen sometimes with two or three masts especially during a long journey. The Arab dhows are not all the same, they have different names and capacities; the *Baghlah* has the largest tonnage of all these dhows. *Boom*, *Ghanja*, *Sambook*, *Batail*, *Beden*, and *Jalboot* are the main types of dhows. The *Baghlah*, *Jalboot*, and the *Batail* were originally chiefly built in Kuwait and other Gulf States, while *Ghanja*, *Beden*, and *Sambook* were built mainly in Oman. The *Baghlah* were rated as 500 tons capacity, and of the rest of the dhows the tonnage limit is about 150-200 tons. Baily, 1988, vol.i, pp. 66, and Russell, 1935, p. 79. See also Bowen, R. "Primitive Water craft in Arabia". *American Neptune*. vol. xii, no. iii, (1952), pp. 100-110.

¹⁷ See Coupland, 1968, pp. 18-20, Kelly, 1968, pp. 534-535, and Russell, 1935, p. 79.

¹⁸ Russell, 1935, p. 79.

¹⁹ Baily, 1988, vol. i, p. 66.

²⁰ Bandar Abbas is a Persian seaport situated in the Persian Gulf south east of Iran. It is the most important point on the whole Persian Coast (on the northern bend of the Strait of Hormuz) between the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman. The name of this port had come from the name of Shah Abbas, the King of Persia during the 14th century. In 1793 Sayyid Sultan b. Ahmad the Imam of Muscat was granted the harbour with the adjoining lands along the Coast from Linjah to Jask on lease until 1854 when the Persians took it back from Muscat. In 1856 Sayyid Sa'id b. Sultan was able to renegotiate the lease for further 20 years. It has been estimated that the value of the annual imports in the second decade of the nineteenth century to the port was 300,000 rupees, and the Sultan of Muscat's annual revenue was said to be between \$MT 8,000 and 10,000. The annual rent payable by the Government of Oman to the Persian Government was increased from 16,000 to 20,000 Tumans

during the second half of the nineteenth century. In August 1866, Sayyid Sālim b. Thuwaini managed with the British Political Resident's support to sign an agreement for the renewal of the lease of Bandar Abbas for eight years, in favour of Sayyid Sālim and his descendants only, at an enhanced yearly rental of 30,000 Tumans. In 1871 Sultan Turki b. Sa'id tried hard through the Government of India to have the Bandar Abbas lease renewed, but all his attempts were unsuccessful. The harbour is now ruled by a Persian governor under the authority of the Islamic Republic of Iran. For more information see Streck, M. "Bandar Abbas", *EI*, vol. i, London; 1913, pp. 694-695. Kelly, 1968, pp. 45, 659-61, 742. Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 480. and Ministry of Information. *Uman fi al-Tarikh* (Oman in History). Muscat; 1995, pp. 473-474, Abu-Yaseen, *Omani-British Relations 1798-1856*. al-Basra, 1981, p. 204, and Kelly, 1968, pp. 534-535.

²¹ Abu-Yaseen, 1981, pp. 204-205.

²² Russell, 1935, pp. 108-110, and Kelly, 1968, p. 540.

²³ Russell, 1935, p. 108.

²⁴ Ibid. p. 108.

²⁵ Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, pp. 470-71. See also Baily 1988, Vol. i. p. 66.

²⁶ Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 471.

²⁷ Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 471.

²⁸ Kelly, 1968, p. 541.

²⁹ Ibid. p. 541.

³⁰ Baily, 1988, vol. i, p. 66

³¹ Kelly, 1968, pp. 541-544.

³² Ministry of Information, Muscat. *Uman fi al-Tarikh*. Muscat; 1995, pp. 474-75.

³³ See Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 471. Russell, 1935, p.123. Kelly, 1968, p. 545.

³⁴ Baily, 1988, vol. i, pp. 66-67.

³⁵ Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 471. Colomb, 1968, p.119, and Kumar, R., *India and the Persian Gulf Region 1858-1907*, London; 1965, p. 31.

³⁶ Aitchison, C. U., *A collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads relating to India and Neighbouring Countries*, New Delhi; 1983, vol. xi, p. 303.

³⁷ Russell, 1935, pp. 124-125. Lorimer, 1986, vol. i, p. 471.

³⁸ Townsend, John, *Oman: The Making of the Modern State*, London; 1977, p. 43.

³⁹ British Parliamentary Papers: *The Zanzibar Papers 1841-1898*, London; 1971, p. 25.

⁴⁰ al-Hashimi, S. M., *Imam Salim bin Rashid and the Imamate Revival in Oman 1913-20*, Ph.D. Thesis. The University of Leeds; 1994, p. 26.

⁴¹ al-Salimi, 'Abudallah bin Humayd. *Tuhfat al-A'yan bi Sirat Ahl 'Uman*, Muscat; 1978, vol. ii, pp. 186-87.

⁴² Ibid. pp.186-187.

⁴³ Qais b. 'Azzan was a member of the collateral branch of the Al Bu Sa'id dynasty, who mainly inhabited the area of the coast of north Muscat, especially al-Rustaq 159 km north of Muscat. However, this branch of the family had been for a period of time the hereditary Governors of Sohar till 1851, when Sayyid Sa'id bin Sultan expelled them from the town. After the death of Qais bin 'Azzan, his son 'Azzan had been very active during 1865-1868, the date of his establishment of the Imamate in Oman after disposing of Salim bin Thuwaini. See Miles, S.B., "Across the Green Mountains of Oman", *Geographical Journal*. vol. xviii, no. 5, (1901), p. 480.

⁴⁴ al-Salimi, 1978, vol. ii, p.187, and Miles, 1901, p. 480.

⁴⁵ Kelly, J.B., *Eastern Arabian Frontiers*, London; 1964, p. 85, and al-Salimi, 1978, vol. ii, p. 188.

⁴⁶ Saldanha, J. A., *Precis of Nejd Affairs, 1804-1904*. Simla; 1904, pp. 18-19. and Kelly, 1968, p. 543.

⁴⁷ Baily, 1988, vol. i, p. 211.

⁴⁸ Landen, R. G., *Oman since 1856*,. New Jersey; 1967, p. 280. See also Calvin, H. A., *Oman: the Modernisation of the Sultanate*, London; 1987, p. 50.

⁴⁹ Kelly, 1968, p. 443.

⁵⁰ Parliamentary Papers. vol. xii, (1871), *Coghlan's Report to the Govt. of Bombay 4th July 1861*.

⁵¹ The Wali acts on behalf of the Imam or the Sultan in the Wilayah that is administrated by him under the Imām or the Sultan's direct surveillance, and the central government is fully authorised to terminate him at any time it wants. The sovereignty of the wali is strictly controlled by the Sultan, and his policy cannot deviate from the Sultan's, unless he rises in revolt against the central government. For further information see al-Hashimi, S.M. *Imam Salim b. Rashid and the Imamate Revival in Oman 1913-1920*, Ph.D. Leeds University, 1994. chapter vii.

⁵² Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p.472.

⁵³ Parliamentary Papers. vol. xii, (1871), *Coghlan's Report to the Govt. of Bombay 4th July 1861*.

⁵⁴ Parliamentary Papers. vol. xii, (1871). *Letter from the Government of Bombay to Thuwaini 8th Rabe al-Awwal, 1275*.

⁵⁵ Parliamentary Papers. vol. xii, (1871), *Coghlan's Report to Anderson. Secret Dept.* no. 10. of 1861.

⁵⁶Parliamentary Papers. vol. xii, (1871), *Letter from the Government of Bombay to Sayyid Turki b. Sa'id*. Dated 13th May 1861.

⁵⁷ Baily, 1988, vol. i, pp. 209-210.

⁵⁸ I.O.R. R/15/6/4. *Letter from the British Agent at Muscat to the Secretary to the Govt. Political Dept.* Dated Muscat, 8th June 1861.

⁵⁹ I.O.R. R/15/6/4. See the same letter

⁶⁰ Baily, 1988, vol. i, p. 210.

⁶¹ I.O.R. R/15/6/4. *Letter from the British Agent at Muscat to th the Govt. Political Dept.* Dated June 8th 1861.

⁶² I.O.R. R/15/6/4. See the same letter.

⁶³ I.O.R. R/15/6/4. *Letter from Lt. W.M. Pengelley to A. Kinloch, Secretary to the Govt. Political Dept.* Dated 11th June 1861.

⁶⁴ I.O.R. R/15/6/4. See the same letter.

⁶⁵ I.O.R. R/15/6/4. See the same letter . Dated 11th June, 1861.

⁶⁶ I.O.R. R/15/6/4. *Letter from W.M. Pengelley, British Agent at Muscat to A. Kinloch.* Dated Seeb, 6th July 1861.

⁶⁷ I.O.R. R/15/6/4. *Pengelley to Kinloch, the same letter of 6th July 1861.*

⁶⁸ I.O.R. R/15/6/4. See the same Letter.

⁶⁹ I.O.R. R/15/6/4. See the same letter.

⁷⁰ I.O.R. R/15/6/4. See the letter from Pengelley to Kinloch. Dated Seeb 6th July 1861.

⁷¹ I.O.R. R/15/6/4. See the same letter.

⁷² I.O.R. R/15/6/4. See the same letter.

⁷³ Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 272.

⁷⁴ I.O.R. R/15/6/4. *Letter from Lt. W.M. Pengelley to A. Kinloch, Acting Secretary to the Govt. Political Dept.* Dated Seeb, 17th July, 1861.

⁷⁵ I.O.R. R/15/6/4. *Letter from Lt. Pengelley, to the Acting Secretary to the Govt. Political Dept.* Dated Barka, 30th July 1861.

⁷⁶ I.O.R. R/15/6/4. *Letter from Lt. W.M. Pengelley the British Agent at Muscat, to the Acting Secretary to the Govt. Political Dept.* Dated Muscat, 26th August 1861.

⁷⁷ I. O. R. R/15/6/4. See the same letter

⁷⁸ I.O.R. R/15/6/4. *Letter from Lt. W.M. Pongelley to the Secretary to the Govt. Political Dept.* Dated Barka, 3rd August, 1861.

⁷⁹ I.O.R. R/15/6/4. See the same letter.

⁸⁰ I.O.R. R/15/6/4. *Letter from Lt., Pongelley to the Acting Secretary to the Govt. Political Dept.* Dated Muscat, 26th August 1861.

⁸¹ I.O.R. R/15/6/4. See the same letter.

⁸² I.O.R. R/15/6/4. *Minute by the Honorable the Governor.* Dated 24th September 1861.

⁸³ I.O.R. R/15/6/4. *Minute by the Honorable the Governor.* Dated 24th September 1861.

⁸⁴ I.O.R. R/15/6/4. *Minute by H. Excellency the Governor in Chief W. Mansfield.* Dated 27th September, 1861. See also I.O.R. R/15/6/4. *Minute by the Honourable Mr. W.E. Frere.* Dated 27th September 1861.

⁸⁵ I.O.R. R/15/6/4. *Minute by the Honourable the Governor.* Dated the 24th September 1861.

⁸⁶ I.O.R. R/15/6/4. *Letter from A. Kinloch Forbes, Acting Secretary to the Govt. of Bombay, to W.M. Pongelley, British Agent at Muscat.* Dated Bombay, Castle, 5th October 1861.

⁸⁷ I.O.R. R/15/6/4. See the same letter.

⁸⁸ I.O.R. R/15/6/4. See the same letter.

⁸⁹ Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 476. See also Phillips, W. *Oman, A History.* London; 1971. p. 138, and Baily, 1988, vol. i. p. 212.

⁹⁰ The murder of Sultan Thuwaini had occurred on approximately 11th February, 1866, while he was taking his mid-day nap at his room in the Castle of Sohar. The British officials believed that Sālim shot his father through the forehead with a double barrelled pistol and he immediately died, but, Sayyid Sālim alleged that his father died after a short severe illness during his visit to Sohar. With regard to this incident John B. Kelly mentioned that, on the night of 13th February 1866, Sālim crept into his father's room in the Castle, and stabbed him while he was in bed, with assistance of the Wahhabi confederate Saif bin Sulimān al-Bishri. See Baily, 1988, vol. i, p. 212. Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 476, al-Salimi, 1978, vol. ii, p. 189, Kelly, 1968, pp. 649-650, and Phillips, 1971, p. 138.

⁹¹ Baily, 1988, vol. vi. p. 300.

⁹² Hoskins, H.L., *British Routes to India.* London; 1928, p. 377.

⁹³ Hay, Rupert, "Great Britain's Relations with Yemen and Oman", *Middle Eastern Affairs.* vol. xi, (1960), pp. 144-145.

⁹⁴ Tusen and Quick, 1992, pp. 131-132.

⁹⁵ Ibid. p. 134.

- ⁹⁶ al-Salimi, 1978, vol. ii, p. 190.
- ⁹⁷ Russell, 1935, p. 125.
- ⁹⁸ Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 477.
- ⁹⁹ Baily, 1988, vol. i, p. 23; al-Salimi, 1978, vol. ii, p. 190, Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 477.
- ¹⁰⁰ I.O.R. R/15/6/4. *Letter from the Secretary to the Govt. of India, to the Secretary of the Govt. of Bombay.* Dated Simla, 18th April 1866.
- ¹⁰¹ Baily, 1988, vol. i, pp. 231-232
- ¹⁰² I.O.R. R/15/6/4. *Letter from Lt. Col. Lewis Pelly, Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, to C. Gonne, Secretary to the Govt. Bombay.* Dated Muscat, 13th September 1866.
- ¹⁰³ I.O.R. R/15/6/4. *Letter from Lt. Col. Lewis Pelly to C. Gonne, Secretary to the Government of Bombay.* Dated Bushire, 21st September 1866.
- ¹⁰⁴ Aitchison, C.U., *A collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads Relating to India and Neighbouring Countries.* vol. xi, New Delhi, 1983, p. 273. See also Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 478; Kumar, R., *India and the Persian Gulf Region 1858-190,* London; 1965, p. 41.
- ¹⁰⁵ al-Salimi, 1978, vol. ii, p. 190.
- ¹⁰⁶ Badger, *Imam and Seyyids*...p. cix, Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 479. and al-Salimi, 1978, vol. ii, p. 191.
- ¹⁰⁷ Badger, 1986, p. cix.
- ¹⁰⁸ al-Salimi, 1978, vol. ii, p. 191.
- ¹⁰⁹ Ibid. pp. 191-92.
- ¹¹⁰ Kelly, 1968, p. 657.
- ¹¹¹ Ibid. p. 657.
- ¹¹² Badger, 1986, p. cix. and al-Salimi, 1978, vol. ii, p. 191.
- ¹¹³ Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 479; Kelly, 1968, pp. 656-657, and Badger, 1986, p. cx.
- ¹¹⁴ Lorimer, 1915, p. 479. Kelly, 1968, pp. 656-657; Badger, 1986, p. cx.
- ¹¹⁵ Badger, 1986, p. cx. and Kelly, 1968, p. 658.
- ¹¹⁶ Badger, 1986; p. cx. and Kelly, 1968, p. 658.
- ¹¹⁷ Mss. Eur. F126/40. *Political Dept. No. 94. India Office.* Dated 23rd November 1867.

¹¹⁸ Mss. Eur. F126/40. *Political Dept. No. 94. India Office. Dated 23rd November 1867.*

¹¹⁹ Baily, 1986, vol. i, p. 232.

The Reign of Sayyid 'Azzan (1868-1871) and Sayyid Turki's Challenge

3.1. General Situation in Oman 1868-1869

Sayyid 'Azzan bin Qais b. 'Azzan was one of the great-grandsons of the Imām Aḥmad bin Sa'id, the founder of the Al Bū Sa'idi dynasty in Oman. He was descended from his second son Sayyid Qais bin Aḥmad. Sayyid 'Azzan bin Qais came to power at a very crucial period in Oman's modern history. He presented himself as the most qualified member of the dynasty, and he had to fight against many enemies from inside and outside the country. Sayyid Sālim bin Thuwaini was the obvious challenger against whom Sayyid 'Azzan bin Qais had to fight at an early stage, but in fact the affirmation of Sayyid Turki bin Sa'id (who was on pension in India by that time) as having priority in ruling the country, made Sayyid 'Azzan more active than Sayyid Sālim in trying to gain power in Oman. Under these circumstances, Sayyid 'Azzan b. Qais, with the substantial support of the 'ulema, was determined to build a State with a religious basis, or Imāmah.¹ Furthermore, he felt that large scale support from the tribes of Oman against the then Sultan Sayyid Sālim offered more security than British support as well as encouraging him to play an effective role throughout the country in order to become the elected Imām. He soon achieved a major victory over Sālim at Muscat, and in consequence the latter was exiled to Bandar Abbas. 'Azzan's father-in-law and the most powerful leader of the 'ulema Shaikh Sa'id b. Khalfan al-Khalili, became the Wali of Muscat and his adviser. The white flag on Muscat fort replaced the traditional red flag of Oman, and everything considered against Islamic law was forbidden, such as tobacco, alcohol, and music.²

3.2. British attitudes towards 'Azzan's government

3.2.1. 'Azzan's capture of Muscat and Sālim's reaction

As a result of these changes, and with regard to Sayyid 'Azzan's capture of power in the country, Sayyid Turki bin Sa'id followed developments from India, where he remained in touch with some of the prominent Omani Shaikhs, like Shaikh Ḥamad bin Musallam of Bani Bū Hasan, who provided him with news letters from Oman covering the general situation after his departure for India. On 13th November 1868, the British Political Agent in Muscat had sent to the Government of Bombay a translation of one of these letters which Shaikh Ḥamed had addressed to Sayyid Turki, in which he stated the following:

"I address you this letter from Muscat to inform you of all that has transpired here... This has come to pass by God's will, and before this we were your supporters, but God did not give us success as we loved Syud Saeed and his descendants whose favour towards us have always been great. You know what we suffered from Salim bin Thoweynee till God expelled him. Now we are come at the bidding of the Imam 'Azzan bin Ghes and that of chief of Salim. We now see the whole country and all the forts in Oman in his possession. All the tribes have acknowledged him, and they have demanded our allegiance which we have tendered because it is impossible to go against an Imam".³

This feeling among the tribes of Oman loyal to Sayyid Turki's right to rule the country broke his silence, and revived his old desire to gain power in Oman. Although the British favoured Sayyid Turki's aims over Sayyid 'Azzan's, it was their policy not to become directly involved in his struggle. Throughout the coming years, Oman was subjected to very serious trouble between Sayyid 'Azzan b. Qais and Sayyid Turki b. Sa'id with the British authorities in India taking a neutral stance in the conflict, in spite of their dissatisfaction with the authority of Sayyid 'Azzan.

When Sayyid 'Azzan had taken possession of Muscat in October 1868 and Sayyid Sālim had left the country, the British authorities in India had declined to offer the latter armed support.⁴ Sayyid Sālim b. Thuwaini had made his own

unsuccessful efforts against Sayyid 'Azzan, while Sayyid Turki, who was not in a better situation given the size of his task and the inadequate support against 'Azzan, had to depend upon his own energy. Although real assistance from the British in his cause was limited, the decision was taken to give him freedom to proceed in any action which was seen as necessary to establish his authority in Oman. For the British, 'Azzan was an undesirable religious leader who had seized power from the parricide, Sālim b. Thuwaini, and his activities in Muscat brought some inconvenience.⁵

In the meantime, the events which had recently taken place in Oman were enough to encourage the Government of Bombay to withdraw their prohibition against Sayyid Turki's attempts to interfere in the affairs of Oman during Sayyid 'Azzan's reign. Sayyid Turki b. Sa'id was thinking of rallying to his side the tribes of al-Sharqiyyah, especially the Bani Bū Hasan, Bani Jaber, al-Hishm, Bani Bū 'Ali, and the Janabah. This was in order to attempt a coup in Oman. The plan had tacit support from the British Political Resident Col. Lewis Pelly.

Primarily through the influence of 'Azzan's chief supporter Shaikh Sa'id b. Khalfan al-Khalili and the other religious leaders, like Ṣaliḥ bin 'Ali al-Ḥarthi, the Government of India through her representative in the Persian Gulf and the Political Agent at Muscat were anxiously scrutinising the new government in Muscat.⁶ The Political Agent at Muscat was absolutely against 'Azzan b. Qais's policy. This had two reasons: firstly, because his power base was in al-Rustaq, and secondly, because of his alliance with al-Khalili and Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali al-Ḥarthi. These later two had proved themselves to be good allies in Sayyid 'Azzan's movement against Sayyid Sālim b. Thuwaini, attacking from the interior towards the capital of Muscat, when one town after another fell into their hands in very quick succession.⁷ At this stage, the Political Agent at Muscat, Captain G. A. Atkinson, informed the Government of Bombay that Sayyid Sālim b. Thuwaini was unable to control the situation in the country and he urged them to support Sayyid Turki b. Sa'id in his claim to gain power in Oman.⁸

Sayyid Turki was in exile in Bombay at this time. In fact the British authorities in Muscat fully comprehended Sayyid 'Azzan's plan to take Muscat.

On 21st September 1868, Sayyid Sālim had communicated to the British Political Agent at Muscat, Captain Atkinson, before the fall of the capital into Sayyid 'Azzan's hands, that Sayyid 'Azzan had captured the town of Barka, despite the fact that the fort of the town was still under the control of Sayyid Sālim's men. He had taken this step with the purpose of getting their military assistance, while his troops would march from where they were in the Wadi al-Ma'awil towards Barka. However, such assistance was never given.⁹ Consequently 'Azzan's troops found no difficulties in proceeding against Muscat, and the town was soon under their control. At the same time, on 21st September 1868, Captain Atkinson had written to the British Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, Lt. Col. Lewis Pelly, informing him of the new situation in Oman generally and in Muscat in particular. He had confirmed to him that all the reports received hitherto from inside the country showed that some of the Omani tribes, in some measure devoted to Sayyid Turki, had refused to take part in the movement against Muscat, and that their present attitude had been forced upon them because of a fear of compromising their own interests. All information indicated that they would not like to see 'Azzan b. Qais on the throne, as this would result in the country being controlled by the 'ulema.¹⁰

There was also reason to suppose that the Bani Bū 'Ali and the Janabah, two of the most warlike among the Omani tribes, being in open war against each other at this time, would not be able to come to the assistance of Sayyid Sālim against Sayyid 'Azzan as he expected (they had done so on every previous occasion). The Hishim and Bani Jaber were the only tribes on the side of Sayyid Sālim who had ever shown any fighting interest. Without the backing of the Bani Bū 'Ali and the Janabah tribes Sayyid Sālim was not in a position to challenge Sayyid 'Azzan's.¹¹ Given all these facts the British authorities at Muscat were enthusiastic to see Sayyid 'Azzan defeated

and dismissed from Muscat, but only by the Sultan's own forces and the loyal tribes, and the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf Lt. Col. Pelly had confirmed that the Acting Political Agent at Muscat was not to be involved in this course.¹² On the other hand Atkinson believed with confidence that the support of some of the al-Sharqiyyah tribes would be able to reinforce the Sultan's side, and that with a little courage and energy from his troops Muscat and Matrah would be successfully defended.¹³ However, despite all these speculations, the role of the 'ulema was not expected to reduce their ability in the event of Sayyid 'Azzan attacking Muscat and capturing it.

The Political Agent at Muscat had become convinced that the only way of bringing relative peace to Oman was by supporting Sayyid Turki, Sayyid Turki being seen to be the only one of all the fighting parties who was the most fit in every respect to reign in Oman.¹⁴ It was more likely, however, that the British Political Resident's desire was to stand behind Sayyid Turki's ambitions to establish his rule, and to support him during his struggle with Sayyid 'Azzan: the British eagerness in general was significantly in favour of Sayyid Turki b. Sa'id even though they were unwilling to be directly involved at that time. It was also their belief that without their firm support, a successful outcome could not be guaranteed. Thus they gave Turki confidence and encouragement plus financial support in his operations against his opponent.¹⁵ On 22nd September 1868, the Acting Political Agent at Muscat reported to the Secretary to the Government in the Political Department on the internal affairs of Oman, in which he suggested that Sayyid Sālim b. Thuwaini should abdicate in favour of Sayyid Turki, and asked the Government of Bombay to seriously consider this. He clearly stated that there was no braver man than Sayyid Turki, not only in the ruling dynasty but in Arabia as whole at that time, and that the people of Oman should be free to choose. Atkinson believed as a result of the evidence there that if Sayyid Turki were in a position to be elected in the present situation, he would be elected unanimously by all the tribes in Oman.¹⁶

However, the Government of Bombay's policy was one of non-direct intervention in the internal affairs of Oman. Accordingly Sir John Lawrence, the Governor-General and Viceroy of India, instructed the Political Agent in Muscat and the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf not to interfere directly in the troubles in Oman. In the absence of British involvement in supporting Sayyid Turki, 'Azzan's aspiration to establish his power as the Imam of Oman was soon realised. The result of that movement had been achieved at the expense of Sālim b. Thuwaini and Sayyid Turki, and Sayyid 'Azzan was now to place in power a group of people instead of an individual, the group which Sayyid 'Azzan from the beginning had largely depended upon as his advisers and supporters.¹⁷ Among these the leading figures were Shaikh Sa'id b. Khalfan al-Khalili, Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali al-Ḥarthi, and Shaikh Mohammed b. Sulayyim al-Ghārbi.¹⁸

The question now before the authorities of India was whether their interests in Oman would be secure if Sayyid 'Azzan b. Qais had the throne of Oman or whether they should support Sayyid Turki, as he was the original pretender of the Sayyid Sa'id b. Sultan line, although this claim had weakened considerably from the first day of 'Azzan's rise to power. British policy from now on could be interpreted as one of opposition to Sayyid 'Azzan's government, even though it remained attached to the doctrine of non-direct intervention in Omani internal affairs, as they never tried to use their power to force Sayyid 'Azzan to abdicate.

For a short time, Sayyid Azzan's rule became popular, and the Political Agent at Muscat had witnessed elements of relative stability. Sayyid 'Azzan's popularity in power and the support of his people did not last long, as experience confirmed that a monarchy was preferable to a hierarchy, and they realised that Sayyid Turki would undoubtedly be back in Oman to take over power in the country in the coming years.¹⁹ Sayyid Turki remained popular with some influential shaikhs like Ḥamad b. Musallam of the Bani Bū Hasan tribe, who discussed this issue with the Political Agent in

Muscat on one of his visits to the Agency. He informed him that they still loved Sayyid Turki, but in the present situation, with the Government under Sayyid 'Azzan, and the spiritual leaders controlling the country, the people of Oman including Sayyid Turki himself had no option but to accept Sayyid 'Azzan.²⁰ It was said there was no hope whatsoever of Sayyid Turki coming to power at that time, and Shaikh Hamad had requested the British Political Agent to convey his views to Sayyid Turki and to inform him of the current state of Oman and its people.²¹

3.2.2 *Sālim's failure to recover power in Oman*

In January 1869, the Government of Bombay continued its correspondence concerning Omani affairs with regard to the British official attitude towards the attempts of Sayyid Sālim b. Thuwaini to regain power in Oman. They concluded that it would be impossible for the Government of Bombay to interfere on behalf of Sālim against Sayyid 'Azzan.²² It was during this time that the Government of Bombay forwarded a copy of a letter addressed to the Acting Political Agent at Muscat written by the British Political Resident in the Persian Gulf dated 19th February 1869, together with reports to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf and the Political Agent in Muscat. In these they mentioned Sayyid Sālim's appearance in Dubai for the purpose of gathering support to invade Oman. However, they informed the British authorities in the region that, although Sayyid Sālim had been in Dubai for some time and the news had reached Muscat from Bandar Abbas that he had left Dubai on 7th February at the head of about 3,000 men to attack Muscat, no intelligence of the kind had arrived by land; there was no reason whatever in the British Resident's opinion to suppose that Sayyid Sālim would get any effectual support from the Wahhabis in al-Buraimi. In reaction to this news, the action taken by the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf was to order the gun-boat *Hugh Ross* to proceed with or without Captain Way the 1st Assistant Resident, towards the Omani Coast to cooperate with the Acting Political Agent at Muscat for the purpose of protecting British subjects and their

interests there.²³ The Governor-General in Council had been informed by the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf that the First Assistant to the Political Agent at Muscat should accept only British instructions fulfilling the direct orders of the Resident.²⁴ In fact Sayyid Sālim achieved nothing from his attempt to regain power in Oman as the British authorities offered no material encouragement or help.

Sayyid 'Azzan himself was aware of the need to keep the British authorities in Muscat and the Persian Gulf in touch with his position in Oman to encourage them to be more friendly to his government. In Jumada al-Awwal, 1286 (February 1869) he wrote to the British Political Resident, Colonel Pelly, informing him of his return to Muscat after achieving his success against the Wahhabis in al-Buraimi.²⁵ Having started with this notable success by the middle of the year 1869, he had managed to spread his authority over a large number of Omani cities, including al-Buraimi, Dhank, Bahla, Nizwa, Manah, Izki, etc. He had also succeeded in bringing under his authority the Ja'alan district and the city of Sur.²⁶

He was obviously concerned about the British official acceptance of his sovereignty, which was very important to him in order to confirm his rights to be in the position of leading the country vis-a-vis his rivals Sayyid Turki and Sayyid Sālim. The British had a strong and effective influence in the area which under Colonel Lewis Pelly had become more direct than previously. He also knew that without their approval the Zanzibar subsidy would be out of his reach and he depended on this a great deal.

3.2.3. *Sayyid Nasir b. Thuwaini taking Gwader*

It was Sayyid Turki's attempts to recover power in Oman which posed the principal threat to Sayyid 'Azzan's rule in conjunction with the British disposition toward Turki. In early 1869, the British authorities in India remained in the position of regarding 'Azzan as a usurper of the throne of Oman, while they looked on Sayyid

Turki's movement as undesirable.²⁷ The second major obstacle to Azzan's authority came from the Ghafiri tribes of the Jabal al-Akhdar, al-Zahirah and various other districts which had remained neutral during the conflict between Sayyid 'Azzan and Sayyid Sālim.²⁸ Accordingly, considerable influence upon events was extended by the British authorities in India, who prohibited the competitors in Oman from launching naval attacks against one another, even if some distance out of Oman. This prohibition made it impossible for 'Azzan to recover Gwader from Nasir bin Thuwaini, who made a successful crossing from Muscat in April 1869 and established himself with the support of local residents as the master of the region.²⁹ At the same time they prevented Sayyid Nasir from making Gwader a base for sea operations against Muscat, as he had intended to do. It was also made clear to Sayyid Sālim b. Thuwaini that the British authorities in India would not allow him to recover his position in Oman by using Bandar Abbas as head-quarters for an invasion of Oman by sea, and further, that he would remain under their control as long as he stayed there.³⁰ The British authorities in Muscat and the Persian Gulf were fully informed of the movement of Sayyid Nasir b. Thuwaini against Gwader. The confirmation of this came when the British Political Agent at Muscat, H. Disbrowe, confirmed for the British Political Resident in the Gulf, Colonel Lewis Pelly, Nasir's movement which had obviously been made by sea. He mentioned that his expedition was by the invitation of the Baluchis of Gwader, who were very hostile to 'Azzan and his supporters among the 'ulema. Disbrowe also reminded the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf of the British Government's desire that all sea operations by any party at Muscat or anywhere else should be prevented by force if necessary, and that the instruction should be thoroughly carried out. In conjunction with this, he asked him to supply the Agency at Muscat with precise information of any movement by sea whether to Zanzibar, Bandar Abbas, Mekran or anywhere else.³¹

On 13th February 1869, the Acting Political Agent at Muscat, G.A. Atkinson, received a letter from the Political Resident in the Gulf to confirm the British responsibility for the maintenance of peace at sea, and the *Hugh Ross* was instructed to go to the Omani coast for this purpose. Consequently, the Political Agent in Muscat reported to the Political Department on this issue on 19th February 1869 regarding Sayyid Sālim's attempts to fight against Sayyid 'Azzan from the sea and the British Representatives' thoughts on the matter.³² In fact, the enforcement of this British policy temporarily affected Turki's attempt to wage war by sea against 'Azzan. But a new episode in this matter began shortly after Sayyid Turki left Bombay with the intention of recovering power over Oman from 'Azzan b. Qais.

3.2.4. *The question of recognition of Sayyid 'Azzan*

During this time, Sayyid 'Azzan bin Qais had been working effectively among the Omani tribes to gain reassurance of their loyalty. He spent the first two months of 1869 campaigning in the interior of Oman, fighting those who remained outside his influence and bringing those who were already with him into a closer relationship. He achieved this task with a degree of success, even though the Government of India had not yet recognised him as the Head of State. Lewis Pelly was strongly opposed to Sayyid 'Azzan and was in favour of Sayyid Turki.³³ He did not favour the idea that the Government of India should recognise 'Azzan as the Imam of the country and this was also the view adopted by the Political Agent in Muscat, Lt. Col. Herbert Disbrowe.

After Sayyid 'Azzan had returned to Muscat on 14th December 1869 from his latest expedition inside Oman against the tribes hostile to his rule, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf sent a despatch on 22nd February 1870 to the Secretary of State regarding the question of 'Azzan's recognition.³⁴ On 14th March 1870 the situation changed slightly in favour of Sayyid 'Azzan, with the arrival of the French

gun-boat *Le Brunul* at Muscat: The commander recognised 'Azzan's government. A few weeks later, a Dutch corvette visited the Port of Muscat and saluted the white flag of 'Azzan's Government.³⁵

On 29th March and again on 8th April 1870, Pelly informed the Government of India about the attitude of the ruler of Abu Dhabi, Shaikh Zaid bin Khalifah, who, since the Wahhabi defeat in al-Buraimi had supported Sayyid 'Azzan b. Qais' cause. Shaikh Zaid b. Khalifah received from Sayyid 'Azzan b. Qais a portion of the itawa or tribute, which had been paid by previous sultans to the Wahhabi Amir. This had been paid to secure the help of the ruler of Abu Dhabi in protecting Sayyid 'Azzan's northern territories.³⁶ Both from within and from outwith Oman, the British authorities faced difficulties connected with 'Azzan's recognition. Colonel Pelly accordingly felt that it would be very embarrassing for the British authorities in the region to be excluded from recognising 'Azzan, and the question was whether it would be possible for them to implement policy in the area without having to recognise Sayyid 'Azzan formally, or whether to follow the French and the Dutch line. Eventually he found a way for Sayyid 'Azzan's government to receive British recognition, provided it was based upon the following points:

"1- by being recognised by us, the status of Muscat Government would be improved, both abroad and at home, while the public mind would cease to mis-apprehend our relations with other aspirants to power.

2- Recognition would probably be considered to imply restoration of Gwader, and the other outlying Muscat territories in Mekran; also perhaps, our good offices in respect to release of the Bandar Abbas district.

3- A recognised Ruler of Muscat would probably infer that the arbitrament of the late Earl Canning would secure to him the Zanzibar subsidy; and this is a question in which the vassal chiefs of Oman are interested, for this subsidy is a source whence those chiefs are benefited by the Muscat Ruler".³⁷

Accordingly the Bombay Government approved Colonel Pelly's previous suggestion and no resolution to this difficult question was reached, and 'Azzan's

position remained officially unrecognised by the British authorities in India until his death on 30th January 1871.³⁸

3.3. Sayyid Turki's attempts to recover Oman and the British reaction

3.3.1. *The Sayyid's First Attempt*

Sayyid Turki was free to pursue his claim to the sultanate, but without British support for his project. This support seemed to be crucial to his success, but he preferred to stay in India for some time, pending the outcome of events in Oman and the British reaction to them. He finally left India in March 1870, apparently for the Persian Gulf, but in actual fact for Muscat, as a private passenger on board a British mail-steamer—this without the express permission of the Government.³⁹ On 14 March 1870 he arrived in Muscat, but was prohibited from landing by the British authorities there, and soon after left for Bandar Abbas, where he was welcomed by Haji Ahmed, the former wazir to the Sultan Sayyid Thuwaini b. Said, who was now the Governor of the port under Persian authority.⁴⁰ Accordingly the Government of India wrote to the Bombay Government that the arrival of Sayyid Turki on board a British mail-steamer had apparently annoyed the Muscat authorities, who believed that he was supported by the British in a move to establish himself as ruler of Oman. But whatever his intentions, the British authorities in India clearly intimated to the Government of Muscat that they had in no way connived in his manoeuvre, and they would certainly not assist him in any effort to overthrow the government of Sayyid 'Azzan b. Qais.

With respect to Sayyid Turki's request for a loan from the British, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf was instructed to inform him that the Government of India could neither help with money nor assist him in any way in his designs on the throne of Muscat.⁴¹ The British authorities realised that disorder and instability in Oman would follow and that governing the country would be the source of much tension between the pretender Sayyid Turki and Sayyid 'Azzan. On 27th May 1870,

the Government of India again submitted the question of the recognition of Sayyid 'Azzan, to the Secretary of State, with a special recommendation as to the terms and stipulations under which it might be granted. The most effective question on this issue was their desire to know, in case of the recognition of Sayyid 'Azzan, whether the Omani obligations to the British authorities, such as the previous treaties, would be maintained or not. Accordingly the situation in Muscat was fully described in the despatch sent to the Government of Bombay by Col. Lewis Pelly. Despite Pelly's unfriendly manner to Sayyid 'Azzan, the despatch indicated that according to his enquiries in Muscat during the time of his visit to the city, trade was recovering, and that the authorities at Muscat were conciliatory in their behaviour towards the British Agent, desirous even, of promoting British interests.⁴² In accordance with the views of the Political Agent at Muscat, Major Cotton Way, 'Azzan b. Qais had managed to bring most of the tribes of Oman under his authority, and for the present, his rivals did not seem to have a real possibility of expelling him from power.⁴³

Sayyid Turki's return to the Persian Gulf meant that there were now two pretenders opposing 'Azzan b. Qais: Sayyid Turki b. Sa'id and his nephew the ex-Sultan Sālim b. Thuwaini. It was now that the necessity for an absolute ban on the breach of maritime peace was recognised; the Government of India had already declared its prohibition of any operation which would be performed at sea by the authorities of Muscat or against them, and this opinion was based on the fact that the Indian Government had not hesitated in the past, and would not do so in future, to forbid hostilities at sea by persons or states.⁴⁴

3.3.2. *The Sayyid's Second Attempt*

Following these events, the British Political Resident proceeded to Bandar Abbas with the purpose of seeing Sayyid Turki there. On his arrival at Bandar Abbas in April 1870, Sayyid Turki had left the port heading for the Trucial Coast, landing at Dubai

seeking the assistance for his movement from the Trucial Shaikhs, who showed their willingness, with the exception of Zaid b. Khalifah of Abū Dhabi.⁴⁵ In the course of Sayyid Turki's movements, the Government of India were in communication with the Government of Bombay, asking about the circumstances of the departure of Sayyid Turki from Bombay; the same explanation always resulted, that Sayyid Turki had received no express permission from the Bombay Government to return to the Persian Gulf, and had obtained a personal passage in a mail-steamer on the 7th March, 1870.⁴⁶

Undoubtedly, the arrival of Sayyid Turki in the region from Bombay, where he had been detained by the British authorities on board a British steamer, had clearly given rise to the belief on the part of the Government of Muscat and even the people of Oman as a whole, that he had made this crossing with the knowledge and the support of the Bombay Government to overthrow 'Azzan and to seize power in Muscat. Sayyid Turki's project was potentially supported by the Political Resident in the Gulf, who had attached himself to his claim, and had constantly preferred him to any other member of the Al Bū Sa'id Dynasty to rule the country. The British Political Resident had been an old friend to Sayyid Turki from the time of the reign of Sayyid Thuwaini, and paid attention to his advice, on the subject of the previous troubles in Oman when he last left Oman following Pelly's suggestion. Pelly remained very close to him even when he was in communication with Bombay, and visited him regularly during his time in Bombay.

In the meantime, Sayyid Sālīm moved from one place to another along the Persian Gulf, without assistance. The Political Resident in the Gulf reported that Sayyid Sālīm intended to rally some of the tribes from the Arabian coast in order to recover Muscat, as Sālīm considered the tribes to the south still loyal to his cause.⁴⁷ Pelly accordingly instructed Captain Way that Sayyid Sālīm was desirous of embarking some men from the Arab Coast on board his men-of-war. But Sālīm

would not be prevented from his action as long as no breach of the peace occurred in the Persian Gulf.⁴⁸ On the other hand, the British authorities in India and the Persian Gulf were apparently not at all certain that, on his arrival on the Trucial Coast, and in Dubai in particular, Sayyid Turki would be able to convince the local tribes there to support him, even though they knew previously that the chiefs of those tribes had declared themselves against the imamate of 'Azzan at Muscat. At the same time Colonel Pelly admitted that neither Sayyid Sālim nor Sayyid Turki had at the present time any opportunity to stand firmly against Sayyid 'Azzan who by now had control of Muscat and its territories, and was in a strong position and capable of extending his power over the country.⁴⁹

At all events, the British authorities in the Persian Gulf were carefully watching developments in the Gulf in order to keep it under their control. On the 7th May 1870, Col. Lewis Pelly had reported to the Government of India that, according to unofficial communications between himself and the Persian Governor of Bandar Abbas, Haji Ahmed, a vote was apparently cast in favour of Sayyid Turki's position. On 31st May 1870 Pelly also telegraphed both the Government of Bombay and the British authorities in India on the same issue. This time he confirmed that, according to a report from a native Agent on the Arabian coast who had interviewed the shaikh of Abu Dhabi, the littoral shaikhs and the shaikhs of al-Buraimi had demonstrated their loyalty to the shaikh of Abū Dhabi who by now was allied with 'Azzan b. Qais.⁵⁰ So the Agent there saw no chance for Sayyid Turki at that time to fulfil his ambitions with regard to Muscat or its territories.

As a result of the foregoing circumstances, Sayyid Turki admitted the failure of his immediate attempt against Sayyid 'Azzan, and decided to withdraw to Bandar Abbas for the second time in June 1870, after spending nearly two months in Dubai trying to enlist assistance from the shaikhs of the Trucial Coast, and the *tamimah* of the Bani al-Na'im tribe in al-Buraimi oasis. In advance of any attempt to operate again

by sea against Oman, the Government of Bombay asked Col. Pelly to inform Sayyid Turki that the restriction on the campaign by sea would be firmly enforced, and that the maritime peace should continue.⁵¹

3.3.3. *The Sayyid's Third Attempt*

Despite the warning by Colonel Pelly, Sayyid Turki made his third attempt against Oman when, in July 1870, he left Bandar Abbas on board the British ship *Muzaffar* with forty armed Baluchi followers, ostensibly for Bombay; it was suspected however, that he intended to divert the ship towards Muscat.⁵² Soon after his departure, Colonel Pelly, set sail in the hope of catching up with him. Pelly had learned that Sayyid Turki was last seen with seven dhows off the Persian Coast heading towards Jask. Sayyid Turki realised that his expedition under these circumstances would be pointless, and he returned to Bandar Abbas again before Colonel Pelly could overtake him.⁵³ On July 12th 1870, Pelly communicated to the Secretary of State that Turki had been forced to return to Bandar Abbas. Although the Government of India objected to the present campaign by Sayyid Turki and to Pelly's activities in that direction, the Bombay Government sent a telegram to the Viceroy on the 3rd July stating that Sayyid Turki had left Bombay with the authority of the Government of India, and that the Bombay Government knew no reason why the British authority in general had prevented him from launching his mission from Bandar Abbas against the coast of Muscat. Accordingly, the Government of India accused the Government of Bombay of providing inaccurate information about this matter. They repeated this in a telegram dated 17th July 1870, in which they stated that it would be impossible for the Government of India to admit the allegation, which had been submitted by the Government of Bombay, that Sayyid's departure from Bombay was not known to, nor admitted nor authorised by them.⁵⁴ At this stage Sayyid Turki's confidence in returning to Oman apparently vanished, and he believed that ambitions concerning the Omani coast would only be accomplished with British

approval. However, his aspirations were fired again when his brother in Zanzibar Sayyid Majid became involved in this adventure. At the beginning of August 1870, funds of Rs. 20,000 from Zanzibar were sent for Turki's use directly through a Hindu firm at Bombay, Jiram Sewjee.⁵⁵ Majid also promised him a further Rs. 3,000 if he managed to capture Sur, on the coast of Oman, south east of Muscat, and another Rs. 100,000 if he could encourage the Amir of the Wahhabis in Nejd, 'Abdullah b. Faisal, to assist him in taking Sohar.⁵⁶

Simultaneously, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, Col. Pelly, had been involved in this matter and was in continuous communication with the Government of India regarding giving resources to Sayyid Turki's movement. On 1st August 1870 he wrote from Bushire to the Secretary in the Political Department concerning Sayyid's activities in connection with the territories of Muscat confirming to what had been discussed in previous correspondence. He described his embarkation from Muscat on 25th July, and voyage to Jask Station, a central point in the Persian Gulf, where he could watch Sayyid Turki in whatever direction he might proceed in preparation for a hostile landing on the Muscat coast.⁵⁷ In fact the British Political Resident in the Persian Gulf was directed to return to Bushire, on 28th July 1870, losing the opportunity of a good vantage point to watch the movements in the Gulf as he had expected.⁵⁸

While the Resident was at Jask, the Governor of the Port and two other chiefs called upon him, and told to him that Sayyid Turki had written to them to collect men from their territories to accompany him on his mission to attack Muscat. They added that as yet they had taken no action in this matter.⁵⁹ The Governor-General of India was entirely aware of the need to know from the Political Resident the British official position towards this question and the Sayyid's demands, and whether the recent news which had spread were true that the Government of India desired to see Sayyid Turki regain the throne of Oman and its territories and overthrow 'Azzan from his

position. His reply to this allegation was framed within the language of very recent instructions saying that the British authorities in the region had been instructed not to be involved on behalf of either Sayyid 'Azzan or Sayyid Turki.⁶⁰

One of the chiefs asked the British Resident if the news that Sayyid Turki and his followers had returned to Muscat on board an English steamer were true. If this move was by the order of the Indian Government, they would join Sayyid Turki in his revolt against Muscat: they could send their men with him but that it was not their intention to launch any naval attacks.⁶¹ Colonel Pelly reported to the Government of India that the chiefs of the tribes of this part of the Persian Gulf had repeatedly inquired about the British attitude towards the issue. The Indian Government came to the point of changing their position, and discussed with the Political Resident Colonel Pelly whether it would not be advisable to strengthen the position of Muscat territories with British assistance, and then to divide Oman into two parts. One part for example would consist of Sohar and the northern portion which would be given to Sayyid 'Azzan, with Sayyid Turki being allowed to establishing his sovereignty in the southern portion, in a manner similar to the former arbitration when Sayyid Turki held the Sohar portion while Sayyid Thuwaini remained in Muscat.⁶² Colonel Pelly's comment on that discussion, was that the differences between Sayyid Thuwaini and Sayyid Turki were completely different to the present situation and what the British had accomplished in the past was for the purpose of the unity of Oman and its territories.

The Political Resident instantly informed the Government of Bombay that, while he had been at Bushire, he had had no opportunity to communicate with Sayyid Turki at Bandar Abbas personally.⁶³ In spite of this statement from Pelly, Bushire was not that far from Bandar Abbas and Sayyid Turki, and Pelly would have been absolutely able to watch him from there if he had really wanted to. Nevertheless, by that time Sayyid Turki was in financial trouble and was seeking a loan from the

Government of Bombay, and he used Pelly as his mechanism to gain this application. Despite this, as he had already received some money to support his position from his brother in Zanzibar, Sayyid Turki had revived his hopes of getting over his present difficulties. He strengthened his position by encouraging more supporters to attach themselves to his project, increasing his popularity which had been growing among the tribes inside Oman. He had after all, demonstrated his ability to rule even among those who were outside the country, as in Jask and Bandar Abbas. The chiefs of these tribes were interested in his suitability for Muscat and considered themselves as Muscat's subjects and were trying to persuade the British not to stand against Sayyid Turki's aspirations.

Whatever the nature of Sayyid Turki's demands and the British attitude to him, he was in a position to be informed about his task in the Persian Gulf and to follow up the intended project. On 27th August 1870, the Government of Bombay had written to the Principal Secretary of State for India informing him about their concern at the movement of Sayyid Turki against the territories of Muscat.⁶⁴ It was very important for them that Sayyid Turki's movement against Oman's territories to recover the throne of the country should be under their observation, and that the Government of India should signify their intention of watching Sayyid Turki, even though they had greater distaste for Sayyid 'Azzan.

The Political Agent at Muscat, as well as the British authorities in the Persian Gulf, reached agreement to the effect that Sayyid Turki was now and would be more than ever regarded with favour by the majority of the people of Oman. Accordingly, the correspondence between the Government of Bombay and the Governor-General of India strongly advocated the claims of Sayyid Turki, and confirmed his power and abilities to the British Government, its representatives in the region, and the people of Oman, who were likely to be convinced of his accession to the Sultanate. Undoubtedly the British authorities were under pressure as a result of their hesitant

policy attitude towards the situation in Oman, and had accepted the alteration in the conditions which had taken place since the departure of Sayyid Turki from Bombay. However, whether the prohibition had been withdrawn or not, the issue for them was that the British authorities should be aware that they should not allow Sayyid Turki to leave any place whatsoever under their protection, or promise him military assistance in respect of any attempt that he might undertake in the future to establish his power over the territories of Muscat. Accordingly, Sayyid Turki realised that the British authorities would not be the major obstacle in his way to becoming the head of State.

In addition to that, Turki had depended too much on the financial support from his brother Majid, who was by that time prepared to offer him an armed force to help him overthrow Sayyid 'Azzan. Majid had sent his warship *Prince of Wales* to Turki in Bandar Abbas, and had warned the tribes of Oman that they would not be allowed to trade with or to visit Zanzibar while 'Azzan b. Qais remained in power.⁶⁵ This warning was apparently directed in the first instance against the people of Sur and Ja'alan. It was no coincidence that a number of Shaikhs from the Janabah and the Bani Bū 'Ali of Sur visited Sayyid Turki in the port of Bandar Abbas in June, only one month before he made his fruitless mission to Muscat on board the British vessel *Muzaffar*.⁶⁶

Circumstances from now on would change direction regarding the realisation of Sayyid Turki's claim to Omani territories. By this time the British authorities in the Persian Gulf were very interested in the recent offer from Majid to support Sayyid Turki's intention to make his landing on the coast of Oman. The realisation of this and the success of his manoeuvre were dependent upon British sympathy and support for him against the power of the Muscat Government and its supporters amongst the opposition tribes of the interior.

On 3rd September 1870, Lt. Col. Lewis Pelly sent his report on the present situation in Muscat. He stated that after leaving Henjam Station in the Persian Gulf for Bandar Abbas, he had met with the Governor of the Port, Haji Ahmed, on his arrival there. They had discussed the intervention in the interior affairs of Oman of the Sultan of Zanzibar, Sayyid Majid b. Sa'id, who had sent the Zanzibar warship *Prince of Wales*. This ship had arrived at Bandar Abbas and thereafter headed to Bushire. They also discussed the movements of Sayyid Turki as a whole. In his report, Colonel Pelly concentrated on Sayyid Turki's preparations for a sea operation, which he had already started by ordering his baghlah to proceed to a point called Khor Mobarek near Jask while he marched overland.⁶⁷ Pelly then proceeded to Jask to gather confirmed information about the recent move of Sayyid Turki from Bandar Abbas. Promptly, after receiving reliable information about Turki, he sent a telegram to the Political Department as follows:

" Arrived at Jask, Sayid Torkee credibly reported to be with Bughlah and about forty followers at Khor-Mobarek thirty miles distance preparing to follow five Craft gone on with party estimated from two to three hundred men, who landed and await Torkee at Soor".⁶⁸

Pelly was now in a position to prepare himself to receive instructions, and to consider whether he should interfere in Turki's activities or not. For the time being, Pelly was in direct communication with the Political Agent at Muscat to follow Sayyid Turki's strategy to conquer Oman. On 23rd August, Pelly received a telegram from the Acting Political Agent in Oman, Major Way, in which he stated the position of the more powerful tribes in the northern territories of Muscat. For example, the Bani al-Na'im tribe in al-Zahirah, who had risen against 'Azzan's authority, had taken some areas which were now under their influence and had seized the passes of the district. Sayyid 'Azzan was preparing to proceed against them to win back his position. At the same time the Duru'a, Bani Kalban and 'Yal Sa'd were said to be dissatisfied with the

regime of Muscat.⁶⁹ The Government of Bombay had replied to Pelly on this matter on 25th August 1870, stating that :

"unless maritime truce is broken and warlike operations are being carried on by sea, no interference should take place. Colonel Pelly should not prevent Toorki going to Soor alone or with a few followers".⁷⁰

On the other side Shaikh Ṣāliḥ b. 'Alī al-Ḥarṭhi was in Bediyyah, where he had been campaigning on the border of Sharqiyyah to bring the resident tribes there into 'Azzan's service. Nevertheless, that task had not been completely successful because of 'Azzan's failure to keep up his payments to them and to redeem his promise to remove Shaikh al-Khalili, and Shaikh Ṣāliḥ bin 'Alī himself, from his government. Subsequently, Sayyid Turki's party at Sur managed to establish a strong position and took control of the port thus preventing dhows leaving the town, keeping them under control, and forcing them to enter his service.⁷¹

However, in a previous communication about keeping the peace at sea, which was connected with the current situation in Oman, the Secretary to the Government, in the Political Department, had told the Political Resident on 24th August that his task and the present instructions to Sayyid Turki regarding the maritime truce in the Persian Gulf were absolutely sufficient and effective.⁷² By this time Sayyid Turki had left Bandar Abbas, and the Government of Bombay was enquiring of Lewis Pelly his destination, who had accompanied him. Accordingly the Political Resident delayed his departure from Jask, from where he sent his reply to this question, that Sayyid Turki had proceeded towards the town of Sur, the centre of his support in the country, with some 40 armed men on board a baghlah to join his advanced party who had already landed there and were awaiting him in a position where they were able to deny egress from Sur.⁷³

Subsequent to this, Colonel Pelly left Jask very quickly on the evening of 16th August. He headed for Muscat, with the intention of catching Sayyid Turki before he could reach his destination. On 17th August, when about 40 kilometres from Qatar port, Pelly caught up with Sayyid Turki's baghla after he had been at sea for eight days. Sayyid Turki visited the Resident on board his ship, and told to him that he was not heading for Sur, contradicting his previous statement on this matter. He complained to him that the conditions of his stay in Bombay in exile were unsatisfactory, that his pension in India had been stopped, and that his family was without means of support. He said that he was now about to make another attempt to realise his claim with the men he had on board, which could be considered an attack in force on Oman.⁷⁴ Pelly responded to him with caution, and tried to dissuade Sayyid Turki from joining his armed forces which had already taken possession of Sur, saying that if Sayyid Turki were to continue with his move towards the town of Sur, Pelly would be under an obligation to watch him and his activities. Consequently, Pelly then proceeded to Muscat. Shortly afterward he learned that Sayyid Turki's baghlah had continued on her journey to Sur. So the British Political Resident in the Gulf communicated with Sayyid Turki again, who reaffirmed his statement to the Political Resident that he would not proceed to Sur, but that he would stay for some time at a point on the Omani coast between Barka and Qurayyat, 94 kilometres south east of Muscat.⁷⁵ Afterwards, Turki's baghlah had been seen for some time standing off a point near Muscat harbour.

Colonel Pelly knew, on his arrival in Muscat, that all the members of Sayyid 'Azzan's Government were there except Sayyid 'Azzan himself who was at this time out of Muscat, engaging the Wahhabis in the northern part of Oman. He soon communicated with the Imam's Government, reminding them of their failure to liaise with the British authorities in the Gulf with regard to the maritime truce in the recent situation at Muscat. In addition to that Colonel Pelly assured the Imam that he

preferred to put into effect the Government of India's instruction concerning the maritime truce, but no reply was received from the Imam relating to this matter, and although Shaikh al-Khalili was at Muscat no instruction had been given to him. Despite this, the Imām communicated with the Shaikh without referring to this question.⁷⁶ On 30th August, Pelly left Muscat for Sur, while the Muscat Government remained suspicious of the British manoeuvring in the area and their real attitude to Sayyid Turki's claims. The Resident had invited Shaikh Nasir bin Rashid al-Harthi, the Agent of 'Azzan's Government, on board his ship before his departure. Shaikh Nasir accompanied him accordingly.⁷⁷

Shaikh Nasir b. Rashid had been the representative of 'Azzan's Government to the British authorities since Sayyid Turki's first attempt to attack Oman. In April 1869, he had communicated with Lt. Colonel Herbert Disbrowe, the Political Agent at Muscat, regarding the maritime truce in connection with Sayyid Turki's attempt to make his landing on the coast of Oman by sea. On the day of that meeting with the Agent at Muscat, Nasir b. Rashid had conveyed to al-Khalili the Agent's confirmation of the prohibition on the transport of forces by sea whether by their own vessels or not to coastal territories such as Sur.⁷⁸ The Government of Muscat had accused the British Agent of taking a decision which they thought would hold up their access by sea to the main ports on the Muscat littoral territories, and might help give rise to disturbances in their possessions.⁷⁹ Accordingly, Herbert Disbrowe, as well as the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, clearly explained to both parties that the prohibition on naval armed movements extended to all, no matter whether the supporters of Sayyid 'Azzan or their opponents, whether to proceed by sea against one another or otherwise. Neither party would be allowed by the British Government to undertake such action.⁸⁰

When Pelly was near the port of Sur, he met with a baghlah carrying Sayyid Turki's senior naval officer, who visited him on board his ship. He informed Pelly

that several boats had already arrived at Sur from Bandar Abbas carrying Sayyid Turki's supporters and that the parties had landed accompanied by 'Ali b. Khalfan al-'Alawi of the Bani Bū 'Ali, who had played a major part in gathering Sayyid Turki's supporters in Sur. He had occupied the portion of the town which lies southward and eastward of Sur, in a place called al-'Aijah, on behalf of Sayyid Turki. The senior officer of Sayyid Turki's naval forces also informed Pelly that Shaikh 'Ali bin Khalfan had now been waiting for Sayyid Turki's arrival for nearly two months, and he was in a position where with a few of his men he could easily contact Sayyid Turki to obtain new instructions. The political Resident learned that the Master of the dhow was a native of Bushire, who had been involved in carrying the Sayyid's followers and provisions to Sur.⁸¹ As it happens, for the moment, Pelly had no intention of interfering. On Sayyid Turki's arrival at Sur, he had been visited by all the parties. The supporters of 'Ali bin Khalfan had publicly revealed their allegiance to Sayyid Turki. The rest of the Janabah tribes of Sur, apparently a large number, had continued to acknowledge Sayyid 'Azzan's authority.⁸² However, the circumstances at the town were unclear, and it was easy to find those who could be ready within a very short time either to assist the official authority of 'Azzan, or to behave in a friendly manner to Sayyid Turki's movement and his supporters.

Sayyid Turki was indebted to Shaikh 'Ali b. Khalfan's al-'Alawi activities at Sur where 'Ali b. Khalfan had managed to convert most of the Janabah tribes to declare their support for his movement, and had accumulated a large force in favour of the Sayyid. He and his party had succeeded in declaring an embargo on all dhows proceeding to sea, under the pretence that the embargo was approved by the British Government. However, the real object of this embargo appeared to be, the prevention of all seafaring men on shore from opposing Sayyid Turki's arrival, in order to make them available for his plans.⁸³

Actually, Pelly had been reprimanded by the Governor-General in Council for leaving Bushire for Muscat. On 19th August 1870, the Secretary to the Government informed him that the Government of India was of the opinion that he was not absolved from leaving his position in Bushire in order to watch Sayyid Turki's movements.⁸⁴ The Governor in Council had not approved his action, which was appropriate for a naval officer but not for the Political Resident. He added that it was better for him to stay in a position to direct the necessary operation in the Gulf instead of taking part in it, except when urgent political matters required his advice and presence.⁸⁵

It appeared that whatever the personal feeling of the parties towards Sayyid 'Azzan's sovereignty over Oman, the main question was that of the centralisation of power, which had previously been imposed on every chief under the great Sayyid Sa'id b. Sultan. The authority of the warlike chiefs of the interior and the south was respected, and was little interfered with.⁸⁶ Moreover, Pelly remarked on the present Government of Muscat, and its adviser Shaikh Sa'id b. Khalfan al-Khalili, that they had been involved in efforts to restrict the independent power of the tribal leaders and replace them by the local wali, or the representative of the central power. In carrying out this policy, al-Khalili had used his religious influence, while the political leader of the country, the Imam, and his most influential follower Shaikh Ṣaliḥ bin 'Ali had visited in person the majority of the tribes, and whether by using force or conciliation, had brought them under their central power.⁸⁷

In any case, Sayyid 'Azzan's government had apparently given rise to much discontent amongst the chiefs as a result of putting a number of members of tribes into prison, while the Wahhabis, who had been eager to occupy the al-Buraimi oasis for some time, now appeared to be influencing the Bani al-Na'im tribe on the north west of Muscat territories against the government of Sayyid 'Azzan. It seemed that when the Sultan of Zanzibar, Sayyid Majid, had offered the sum of money to the Wahhabi

Amir to oppose 'Azzan's power and encourage his people to occupy al-Buraimi and other northern parts of the territories of Muscat, this act was generally considered as a way of inciting hostility against the authority of 'Azzan.⁸⁸

At this time, Sayyid 'Azzan was proceeding towards the north. Meanwhile, his brother Sayyid Ibrahim bin Qais, his cousin the military commander, Faisal b. Hamood b. 'Azzan, and the Shaikh Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali al-Ḥarṭhi, and a large number of people from al-Sharqiyyah district followed him and met with 'Azzan b. Qais at al-Buraimi. When the Imām was there the Amir Sa'ud b. Faisal joined him in support of his adventure, having been forced to leave Nejd by his brother 'Abdullah b. Faisal the Amir of Nejd.⁸⁹ It is remarkable that although action from Sayyid Turki in the southern part of Oman had been expected for some time, Sayyid 'Azzan, instead of concentrating his forces in that part of the country, had preferred to face the difficulties which had been caused for the time being by the Wahhabis. This is because Sayyid 'Azzan he considered them more dangerous than Sayyid Turki, and so ignored the threat to his sovereignty from the tribes of the south under Sayyid Turki.

As far as Sayyid Turki was concerned the prospects for his move, if he were prompt and active, were more favourable than they had been. The orders of the Government of India, which had to some degree been relaxed in his favour, and the financial support from the Sultan of Zanzibar had strengthened his claim.⁹⁰ Undoubtedly the Zanzibar funds must have been the greatest factor which gave Sayyid Turki the enthusiasm and sufficient influence over the chiefs of the Omani tribes, as well as the Wahhabi Government, who were willing to cooperate with him against 'Azzan in return for the money promised to them from Zanzibar. The tribal shaikhs certainly thought that under the government to be established by Sayyid Turki, they might regain their independent position and influence.

The Political Resident had mentioned to the Government of Bombay that he expected that difficulties would probably face Sayyid Turki during his landing in Oman from a part of the Bani Bū 'Alī of Ja'alan and the Bani Bū Hasan, his old allies, who normally would not oppose him but might adopt a different position.⁹¹ He added that evidently the Bani Bū 'Alī would join Sayyid Turki soon, while there was a possibility that at all events a faction of Bani Bū Hasan would be drawn to his support. The major question however, would be that of the great division of the Omani tribes into two parties, the Hinawi and the Ghafiri, and that the old animosity between them might easily arise again.⁹² Accordingly the Ghafiri tribes were considered the main supporters of Sayyid Turki, while the Hinawi faction was supposed to be in favour of the present Imām. However, matters were not so clear cut, since many of the Hinawi party had joined Sayyid Turki's cause, especially those of al-Sharqiyyah district, during his march towards Muscat in his final attempt.

Sayyid Turki was confident that if he could find the time and money to accumulate the necessary force, the present Government of Oman would resign without strong resistance. However, Sayyid Turki knew that enthusiasm for his cause might wane as a result of any delay in his attempt to conquer Oman.⁹³ Despite the British dissatisfaction, and the potential opposition to Sayyid 'Azzan's authority, the British were treading cautiously, not wishing to be seen as supporting Sayyid Turki's side.

Accordingly, the British Political Resident in the Persian Gulf concentrated his efforts on Sayyid Turki's movements at sea. On 11th September 1870, he reported to the Government of Bombay from Muscat that he had no reliable information regarding the movements of Sayyid Turki since the date of his last sighting near the Muscat coast, but he stated that it had been confirmed that Sayyid Turki was purchasing foodstuffs at a point between Muscat and Sur, and that he had landed either at Khor-Kalba or Khor-Fakkan on the Trucial Coast.⁹⁴ The Political Resident admitted that

there would be a keenly-contested struggle between the two parties, but that Turki appeared to be confident of a conclusive victory over Sayyid 'Azzan. Pelly had also been informed that Sayyid Turki was confident and that he would be able to achieve superiority over 'Azzan at the first engagement against him.⁹⁵ In his communication with Major A. Cotton Way at Muscat on the policy of 'Azzan's, he mentioned that, under the old dynasty, the sultans were not in a position of strength to be able to bring those tribes under their influence, but the policy of Sayyid 'Azzan was from the beginning to subjugate all the tribes of Oman to the central authority.⁹⁶

In the meantime Pelly had received another piece of information from the Muscat authorities, shortly before his departure from the port of Muscat, stating that they had learned that Sayyid Turki had landed at Khor-Fakkan. His comment on this fact was that when Turki was choosing this point, Sayyid had acted judiciously, since although Khor-Fakkan was surrounded by Muscat territories, it was conveniently situated in Qasimi territory, whose tribes were now joining Sayyid Turki in his revolt against the north western Omani frontier.⁹⁷ When Pelly had embarked from Muscat for Bushire in September 1870, he left behind the steamer *Kwangtung* and requested her Commander to consider the ship to be at his service if required. He also requested, as soon as he no longer needed the service of that vessel, that he should permit it to leave Muscat for another point on the Arabian Coast in the Persian Gulf where its service might prove necessary.⁹⁸

The British Political Resident's action was a clear indication that he predicted that Sayyid Turki was determined to take Muscat from Sayyid 'Azzan and that he was thinking of the British subjects in Muscat who during his absence would be left without the protection of a man-of-war on the day of Sayyid Turki's arrival. Despite this preparation on the part of the Resident, he did not yet know the exact location of Sayyid Turki b. Sa'id, but what he was sure about was that he had made his landing somewhere on the Arabian Coast. He believed that in the event of Sayyid Turki

landing anywhere in Arabia, he would expect British support. At this time all the British representatives in the region had already been instructed not to be involved in any such dynastic troubles and not to tolerate any breach of the maritime truce. Pelly accordingly had warned the Government of Muscat that the British Government would bear the responsibility for the personal safety of her subjects and their property in Muscat, and that both parties should also act responsibly in this matter.⁹⁹

The Muscat authorities had indicated more than once that they were uncertain of British neutrality in the conflict between them and Turki, and had accused them of being poised to support Sayyid Turki's position and to protect his interests. However, the British authorities in Bombay and in India instructed their officials to avoid all risk of strengthening this apprehension at that time .

On 16th September 1870, Colonel Pelly reported to the Government of Bombay that the Governor of Bandar Abbas had confirmed to him that Sayyid Turki had arrived at Khor Fakkan and was preparing to proceed towards al-Buraimi. This was probably with the intention of joining the tribes who were in revolt against Sayyid 'Azzan on the north west frontier of Muscat's dominions.¹⁰⁰ The Government of Bombay thought that Colonel Pelly was right not to prevent Turki from fulfilling his intentions at the next stage. The Government of Bombay's order, with the concurrence of the Government of India, to keep the maritime peace enforced had been relaxed in Sayyid Turki's favour.¹⁰¹

3.3.4. *Sayyid Turki and the Road to Success*

When Colonel Pelly prevented him from advancing towards Sur, Sayyid Turki landed at Khor-Fakkan at the close of the month of August 1870. At Khor-Fakkan he met with a group of the Bani al-Na'im, who joined him on his way to the oasis through al-Fujairah on the Trucial Coast, and passing Wadi Ham. On their arrival at al-Buraimi, he was joined by the chiefs of the Bani Qatab and the Bani al-Na'im, who possessed

all the principal forts of the oasis except for one. This was under the control of the shaikh of Abu Dhabi, Zaid bin Khalifah, who held it in the interests of Sayyid 'Azzan b. Qais.¹⁰²

The chiefs of Dubai, Ajman, and Ras al-Khaimah had also agreed to support Sayyid Turki and they were rewarded with funds from Sayyid Majid. Sayyid 'Azzan meanwhile had succeeded in bringing back under his control a large part of the interior, and had established a strong position in al-Zahirah district, northwest of Muscat.¹⁰³ However, Sayyid Turki's effort to rally support against Sayyid 'Azzan was more successful than previously. This was as a result of the growth in his popularity among the chiefs in the region, and because of his strong determination which had led to the revival of the group of Sayyid Sa'id's hopes of regaining control of the country. Sayyid Turki's campaign to change the political situation in his favour was conducted in a peaceful way which suited British policy in the country and encouraged most of the people in Oman to welcome his re-appearance at this stage. However, Sayyid Turki had been well aware that this objective would not be easily achieved, as there were many enemies still opposed to his aims, and that inevitably he would have to fight for his new destiny. The British authorities had powerful sympathies with Sayyid Turki's motives, even if they had tried to keep it concealed from public knowledge for some time, and they quietly encouraged Sayyid Turki to unify his party, and then his country, through his own efforts.

Furthermore the Political Resident Col. Pelly had absolutely no interest in 'Azzan's Government and he was not on good terms either with him or with his advisers. The Government of Bombay was not in favour of his rule either; they refused to recognise him officially as the Imām of Muscat and its territories on many different occasions, and they stopped the payment of the Canning Award of 1861.¹⁰⁴ Subsequently, it was necessary to note that Sayyid Turki had raised the necessary funds and support, and had been allowed by the Government of India, to pursue his

aims in Oman.¹⁰⁵ The Government of Bombay now held a similar position to Pelly, who favoured Sayyid Turki taking over Oman. The Government of Bombay observed that their struggle had been aimed at preserving the stability of the peace at sea, but they did not want the maritime truce extended so that it came under their direct operations.¹⁰⁶

3.4. Sayyid Turki's Operations in Oman

3.4.1. *The Battle of Dhank*

As soon as the news reached Sayyid 'Azzan about the course of Sayyid Turki's attack against al-Buraimi, he and his brother Ibrahim proceeded northwards for the purpose of saving their men there and preventing Sayyid Turki from taking the district. Shortly before his arrival there 'Azzan was told that his ally Shaikh Zaid bin Khalifah of Abu Dhabi had offered to support 'Azzan's military forces there. These succeeded in forcing Sayyid Turki, who wanted to attack Sayyid 'Azzan in al-Zahirah, to change direction from al-Zahirah and to attack Dhank, 295 kilometres north west of Muscat, which was controlled by the Bani al-Na'im tribe.¹⁰⁷ As Sayyid 'Azzan was approaching Dhank he was deserted by a large number of his supporters. They had heard that Sayyid Turki had left al-Buraimi and was heading to Maḥadah, 322 Kilometres north of Muscat, which was under the Bani al-Na'im control, to collect more men before heading to Dhank. Sayyid 'Azzan's troops were still quite numerous: he had managed to keep under his control some 4,000 men.¹⁰⁸ On learning of this fact Sayyid Turki preferred to meet Sayyid 'Azzan at Dhank rather than at al-Buraimi. On 5th October 1870, the two parties were involved in fighting at Wadi Dhank. Sayyid Turki's forces were numerically fewer than those of Sayyid 'Azzan, but his strength and determination coupled with an unusually bitter hatred and desire for revenge which had been provoked and fuelled by the actions of 'Azzan's adviser Shaikh al-Khalili and the military commander Shaikh Ṣaliḥ bin 'Ali, who had

administered many brutalities to their opponents enabled him to triumph.¹⁰⁹ In this fighting Sayyid Turki was more merciful, but on the other hand he was a wise and patient man and knew how to control his troops skilfully. Sayyid 'Azzan's troops were better equipped to win the conflict, as they possessed many different kinds of armament, including even a gun battery which had created pride and confidence among 'Azzan's men.¹¹⁰ However, with the determination of Sayyid Turki's troops to succeed the results of this battle turned out to be completely in his favour, and the battle ended in the somewhat unexpected defeat for Sayyid 'Azzan and his forces. In this battle, Sayyid 'Azzan's side had lost between three and four hundred men, among them members of the *tamimah* of al-Hajriyyin, al-Ḥabus, and the 'Yal Sa'd tribes, and the rest of 'Azzan's force had retreated in disarray. Sayyid 'Azzan and his brother went down to Sohar on their way to Muscat for the coming battle.¹¹¹ Sayyid 'Azzan from this point on never regained the respect he had lost in this combat with Sayyid Turki.

3.4.2. *Sayyid Turki's Campaigns in Oman*

Subsequently, Sayyid Turki marched south to the centre of Oman on his way towards Sur. When he arrived at al-Sharqiyyah, he was joined by the al-Wahibah, whose chief, Shaikh Sa'id b. Nasir, acted effectively in persuading the Bani Bū 'Ali to join Sayyid Turki's party, while the chief of al-Ḥabūs, Shaikh Nasir b. 'Amir al-Ḥabsi, had become one of the Sayyid's numerous supporters in gathering most of al-Ḥabūs to his side. However, the principal success for Sayyid Turki was the allegiance of the former wali of Matrah during the period of Sayyid Sālim b. Thuwaini, Saif b. Sulimān Al Bū Sa'idi, to his cause.¹¹² Saif prepared a large number of his forces, about 5,000 armed men, to blockade Nizwa, 174 kilometres from Muscat in the interior of Oman, and the Wadi Samāil, 92 kilometres west of Muscat. Sayyid himself was leading about 6,000 men from the Bani Bū 'Ali, Bani Bū Hasan of Ja'alan, al-Hajriyyin of Bediyyah, al-Ḥabūs of al-Qabel, al-Dhoru'a of al-Zahirah, al-Wahibah of al-

Sharqiyyah, and the Janabah of Sur. He later camped there and collected a large force in his next move with 200 camels against Sur, which he took on 25th October 1870.¹¹³ In the meantime, Sayyid Turki had received additional funds from the Sultan of Zanzibar, which gave him, further courage and energy to pursue his operations.¹¹⁴

Meanwhile, Sayyid 'Azzan remained at Sohar for some time, but he was able to return to his capital on 10th November, 1870.¹¹⁵ Despite the inferiority of his forces in Muscat, which were small in number and lacked reinforcements, Sayyid 'Azzan felt his ambitions to be admirable, which together with al-Khalili boosted his hopes of winning the next battle with Sayyid Turki. He depended too much on the hope that the tribes which had distanced themselves from him on the ground of the former conflict would not remain enemies for ever.¹¹⁶ Sayyid 'Azzan's forces in Muscat and Matrah did not exceed 800 fighting men. They were certainly an unreliable element in terms of his hope and ambitions of regaining his former position in the country, which by this time was to a large extent occupied by Sayyid Turki, but his main cause for hope was based on the news which had reached him from al-Buraimi, that the oasis still remained under the possession of the Shaikh of Abu Dhabi who was in Sayyid 'Azzan's favour. Furthermore it was said that the tribe of the Bani al-Na'im, as well as part of al-Duru'a tribe, had switched sides to support the Imām, and that they were even ready to surrender Dhank, one of the main towns in the district to his authority.¹¹⁷ There was another point to be added to his hopes, which was that the Shaikhs of the Bani Bū 'Ali and al-Ḥajriyyin regretted breaking off their loyalty to the Imam's authority, and they started communicating with him and asked him to forgive them, and to accept their allegiance and apology. Additionally, Sultan Majid b. Sa'id of Zanzibar had died on 7th October 1870, so Sayyid Turki would lose the funds which were coming to him from there, at least for the time being.¹¹⁸

3.4.3. *The attack on Muscat and the British involvement*

On 29th October 1870, Major A.C. Way visited Sur, and warned Sayyid Turki against any operation by sea. Sayyid Turki replied to him that he had no intention of doing so, or of violating orders of the British Government on this issue. In addition to these assurances, he asked the Political Agent for an interview, but the latter declined to comply to this request. Accordingly, Major Way instructed the Commander of the *Hugh Ross* to stand against any move of armed force by sea upon Muscat.¹¹⁹ The Government of India, on the other hand, instructed Major Way not to permit Sayyid 'Azzan's government to send an expedition against Sayyid Turki in Sur by sea.¹²⁰

They confirmed to him that the British object was to maintain a neutral position between the contestants, and to prevent all warlike operations by sea. The Agent was permitted to change this policy and to give the Government of Muscat permission to use force by sea, only if it needed to undertake a defensive, not an offensive operation. Also, the British Government would not permit Sayyid Turki to undertake aggression.¹²¹ Sayyid Turki was very well aware of the British maritime policy in Oman, but was unable to halt his operations against Muscat. He started his preparations for the next stage in the conflict without any more delay. Sayyid Turki seemed not to be troubled too much by the British prohibition on sea operations, and knew how to exploit the difficulties of Sayyid 'Azzan to his advantage, especially those which were related to the shaikhs of the Omani tribes. By the end of the year 1870, Sayyid Turki had reached the position where he felt quite confident of the success of any future attack against the authority in Muscat.

Good results were achieved in the operation against Muscat at the beginning of January 1871. This involved two divisions, one of which proceeded by sea and was led by his commander Saif bin Sulaymān Al Bū Sa'idi, and the second one by land

headed by himself. On the 13th of the same month he was in al-Muzabi, 177 kilometres south east of Muscat, with a force of between 3,000 and 4,000 men who were about to attack the main force of 'Azzan in al-Sharqiyyah district at Samad. However, his troops were halted by Shaikh Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali al-Ḥarṭhi with support from part of the al-Habūs tribe.¹²² The great success of this campaign came from the sea operation led by Sulaymān, who on 12th January had managed to capture Qurayyat, 94 kilometres south of Muscat on the coast of Oman, while Sayyid 'Azzan and his brother Sayyid Ibrahim were preparing themselves for the next big military confrontation for the defence of Muscat and Matrah.¹²³

Saif bin Sulaymān left his position in Qurayyat, heading northward to Matrah, passing by Muscat on 17th January 1871, but Sayyid 'Azzan was able to drive him off at the first attack on Matrah. 'Azzan's hopes were transferred to the forces on which he depended to fortify the towns of Muscat and Matrah, and the orders were issued to those who were outside the walls of Muscat to come to the support of the troops inside. Levies were imposed on the inhabitants, and additional taxation was also imposed to cover the cost of reinforcements. The British subjects in the town had been instructed by the British Political Agent at Muscat to leave the town temporarily.¹²⁴ In the second attack on Matrah Saif b. Sulaymān succeeded in surrounding the town, and on 27th January 1871, the authorities in Muscat communicated to Way, the British Agent, their intention of sending a force by sea to provide additional support to Matrah against the attack from Saif b. Sulaymān. However, Way avoided giving a direct response to this request, but mentioned that he had already been instructed by the Government of Bombay in early January 1871 to prevent any kind of hostilities at sea, and to inform the Imām that the previous permission which had been given to him to move some force by sea was now cancelled.¹²⁵

Sayyid 'Azzan ignored the warning of the British authorities, and on 23rd January, sent a dhow from Muscat with supplies for the Matrah garrison. This dhow was forced by the British gun-boat *Kwangtung* to return to Muscat and when it made its second attempt to set off for Matrah it was fired on and sunk.¹²⁶ At that time Sayyid 'Azzan was defending the town with his garrison. On 30th January, Saif b. Sulaymān made his final attack on 'Azzan's force at Matrah, where both leaders, 'Azzan and Saif, lost their lives in the fighting. Matrah hereby became the crucial achievement in Sayyid Turki's attempt to gain power in Oman after nearly 20 years' of conflict.¹²⁷

As a result of these events, Colonel Pelly proceeded towards Muscat, where he was needed immediately. On 3rd February the *Hugh Ross* had arrived at Muscat, and Pelly found the town in the hands of Sayyid Turki's men. He promptly communicated to the Government of Bombay, through Gwader, that Shaikh al-Khalili was still holding the Jalali fort in Muscat, and the al-Mairani fort in Matrah, but the towns themselves were under Sayyid Turki's control.¹²⁸ In this connection Shaikh Ṣālih bin 'Alī now occupied the fort of Samāil, where he could watch Sayyid Turki's advance to Muscat very closely. Sayyid Ibrahim bin Qais fled to Sohar, while Shaikh al-Khalili intended to hand over to Ibrahim the authority of the country.¹²⁹ At this stage of the conflict the British authorities in both India and the Gulf had come to the conclusion that they would have to withdraw from direct intervention in Omani waters, and to confine British jurisdiction over the maritime truce to the Persian Gulf alone.

3.4.4. *The fall of Sayyid 'Azzan's government*

At Muscat the British Political Resident in the Gulf was trying to maintain British neutrality in the present conflicts by mediating in the dispute between Shaikh al-Khalili and Sayyid Turki, who by this time was in Muscat. In some way he succeeded in

inducing al-Khalili to accept this offer and to surrender himself to Sayyid Turki at Muscat. On 13th February 1871, he communicated with the Government of India, explaining to them about his mediation in the conflict between Turki and al-Khalili, which had ended with the declaration of peace between the two parties, without the involvement of the British authorities in any transaction.¹³⁰ Al-Khalili believed in Pelly's assurances for his safety in this settlement, since otherwise it would have been impossible for him to give himself up. The signature of the *Wakeels* of Sayyid Turki and the Shaikh al-Khalili were attached to all provisions of the agreement and witnessed by the British authorities. Immediately after this settlement some of the Batinah coast tribes submitted to Sayyid Turki while he was on the point of moving out of Muscat to take over all the forts and territory in person.¹³¹

On 17th February, the British Political Agent at Muscat, A. C. Way, reported to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, Colonel Pelly, that Shaikh al-Khalili had died of fright and diarrhoea, and the next day al-Khalili's son died of the same illness. In the same report he tried to give a brief explanation about the position in Muscat before the death of al-Khalili. He stated to him that Sayyid Turki had found out that Shaikh al-Khalili had been sending funds to Ibrahim b. Qais in Sohar, to raise a force against Sayyid Turki. In addition, Shaikh Nasir bin Rashid al-Harthi was encouraging the people of Muscat to revolt against Sayyid Turki. Accordingly, Sayyid Turki had imprisoned al-Khalili, his son, and Nasir bin Rashid al-Harthi in al-Mairani fort.¹³² The Political Agent at Muscat ordered an investigation of this affair and reported to the Government of Bombay the following:

" On the 16th February, about 7 p.m. His Highness Syud Toorkee sent sheikh Hashool al-Amree (Hashil al-Amri) and two others to Khulelee with his compliments, and to say he wished to see him. Khulelee at first declined the invitation, but afterwards his son and Sheikh Nasir accompanied the messenger. On landing they were set upon by the populace and severely beaten and ill-used. They were then conveyed to the Merani Fort. Later in the evening, His Highness Syud Toorkee had an interview with Khulelee, who was

brought down from the Fort, for he could not walk and appeared quite paralysed. The next day Khulelee died, and I received an intimation from His Highness that he had been like a mad man from the time he was seized and had died from fright and diarrhoea. The next morning, Khulelee's son died from, I am informed, diarrhoea, from which he had been suffering for some time past".¹³³

3.5. Sayyid Turki's Success and British Recognition

Sayyid Turki b. Said had until this time depended very heavily on British assistance for his cause, especially the implicit support of Pelly, and so he managed to gain their recognition in a very short time. He based his claim on this, and Pelly depended upon the popularity of Sayyid Turki and the support of the Omani tribes for his position. Sayyid Turki started his reign with difficulties, similar to those faced by those who preceded him on the throne of Oman. He had proved his skilful ability to control the country, and the British authorities in the Gulf were confident that his strength and wisdom would help him to rule the country and its large number of tribes with conflicting interests. It is our belief that when the British Political Resident in the Gulf was sympathetic to Sayyid Turki, the latter commanded considerable support within the country. This is demonstrated by the conclusion of the events in Oman with the extension of his control to the majority of the tribal shaikhs in Oman, who considered him the future Sultan of Oman. Consequently, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf had played an effective part in the downfall of Turki's opponent, which was due largely to his dissatisfaction with his exercise of power in the country. In addition to this, the British Government in general had not been well disposed to Sayyid 'Azzan's government and was looking for a replacement. The most important factor in this matter was their objection to recognising the government of Sayyid 'Azzan, which was only announced unofficially in February 1870, one year before his death and the fall of his government. The British officials in India had never recognised his position as the Imām.

The recent success of Sayyid Turki depended without doubt on the British policy towards Muscat, which had induced their representative in the area to remain in a position that could maintain the *status quo* in Muscat affairs. This had proved difficult with regard to the Imam's Government, which was extremely unfriendly to the British presence in the country. On the very day that Pelly arrived in Muscat, and before the end of the conflict between Sayyid Turki's force and Sayyid 'Azzan's in Muscat and its territories, he wrote to the Government of Bombay urging them to give immediate recognition to Sayyid Turki's position, which would now be successful in the long term because of the death of Sayyid 'Azzan b. Qais as well as his own prestige as a successful military leader.¹³⁴ By that time, the Government of Bombay was ready to congratulate the new government at Muscat, and to acknowledge Sayyid Turki's authority in Muscat and its territory, in order to make their formal relationship with the country stronger than previously. However, this decision was not fully adopted by all officials at Bombay, where Mr. Tucker, a member of the Bombay Council, was opposed to Pelly's policy towards Muscat affairs. The matter which troubled him was the attitude of Pelly and Major Way towards the position of al-Khalili; the two officials had witnessed and signed a bilateral agreement for the safety of Shaikh al-Khalili, while Sayyid Turki had as already mentioned, refused to respect this when he imprisoned the shaikh and his son. Accordingly Tucker requested the Government of Bombay to delay this recognition, until the matter could be sorted out. Tucker doubted the explanations given for the death of al-Khalili and his son. He also considered the events which had taken place in Oman and the mediation of Colonel Pelly in the dispute between Sayyid Turki and Shaikh al-Khalili, to be prejudiced in favour of Sayyid Turki, and asked that his role in this matter should cease instead of giving it his approval.¹³⁵

However, the opinion of Mr. Tucker was not given precedence, and the Government of Bombay approved Colonel Pelly's policy, and even described his

achievement as prompt but cautious and prudent. The Governor of Bombay, Sir William Fitzgerald, had himself received the news of Sayyid Azzan's overthrow with great satisfaction, and agreed that Sayyid Turki should be quickly recognised as the Sultan of Oman.¹³⁶ As for the views which had been expressed by the Foreign Secretary, C. U. Aitchison, and the Government of Bombay as a whole when the news of 'Azzan's overthrow had reached him, he pointed out that the British protectorate in the Persian Gulf could not be applied to the Gulf of Oman and that the war in that sea was no longer of any concern to the British, and no more affected British trade or the interests of their people than the war in the Pacific Ocean. He also mentioned that a war which had forced the British inhabitants at Muscat to leave the town was far more painful. Furthermore, the Government of Bombay had no intention at this point of interfering in the affairs of Muscat, and that the situation in the Gulf of Oman for the time being, was disadvantageous and absolutely hazardous, and the best thing for them was to evacuate.¹³⁷

In this connection some members of the Viceroy's Council, like B. H. Ellis and Sir Richard Temple, did not agree to any distinction between British policy in the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman.¹³⁸ On 3 April 1871, B. H. Ellis made it clear in his minute to the Secretary of State that the British policy in respect of Muscat and its position in the sea of Oman required very careful consideration. In fact British interests in keeping the maritime peace intact had led the British to exceed their legitimate duty, by going beyond these waters, not because the British had a direct interest in the dynastic affairs of Muscat but because it was in their interest for it to be considered as a separate issue from Muscat affairs, and they hesitated to recognise any one who had taken the power in the country. Accordingly the British authorities had to maintain their position and be obliged to prevent the maritime peace from being breached in any way. The separation between the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman was impossible since the interests of Muscat were closely attached to those of the

British Indian Ports, as well as with those of the Persian Gulf.¹³⁹ Sir Richard Temple also wrote a minute on the same issue, which was entirely in accordance with all the points made by Mr. Ellis, and stated that in addition any requirement for British intervention in Muscat's affairs for keeping peace in these waters should apply to protect British interests in the region.¹⁴⁰

If Sayyid Turki were able to establish his position as Sultan of Muscat, and he were to demonstrate a desire for the official recognition of the British Government, he should show his determination to recover by force of arms the rest of the Muscat territories. Accordingly, the Government of Bombay by now was ready to inform Sayyid Turki that he was entirely at liberty to act in this regard and that they were prepared for the fact that if he managed to do so, there would be no longer any necessity for maintaining the prohibition of naval operations either inside or outside the Persian Gulf. At the same time, he had to accept that the British Government should not become involved further in Muscat affairs in regard to supporting his attempts to recover the rest of the country by force. The recommended interference in the Sayyid's affairs should be only by friendly offers to help him to settle such disputes peacefully.¹⁴¹ This way means the British responsibility for the preservation of maritime peace would be on a line of coast extending from Karachi to the northern limits of the Mozambique channel.¹⁴²

At this point Sayyid Turki was faced with a very urgent issue, the Sohar inhabitants who opposed his rule and supported Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais, who was now in Sohar. Sayyid Turki was urged by Major Way to take prompt action against the resistance of Sohar, and permitted him to send a deputy and fifty armed men by sea, because the submission of Sohar to Sayyid's authority would bring an early settlement in the country which was so desirable for the State and for trade. This action was approved by the Government of India, which had confirmed the liberty of the Sayyid to send reinforcements and ammunitions to fortify the town.¹⁴³ On 3rd

May 1871, Colonel Pelly reported from Bushire on the death of Major Way, which had occurred accidentally due to the discharge of a gun which he had picked up in the morning of the 1st May. His death caused deep sorrow to Sayyid Turki. Sayyid Turki's government was represented at the funeral by the Wali of Muscat, and a general mourning was ordered in Muscat itself.¹⁴⁴ This enhanced Sayyid Turki's standing with the Government of India. His action was sufficient to persuade the British to hasten their recognition of him as Sultan of Oman. On 8th May 1871, Major (later Colonel) Edward Ross occupied the vacant position as the new Political Agent at Muscat, and remained in this post till 14 December 1872.¹⁴⁵

As the result of the recent troubles in Oman the news reports of 22nd April 1871 gave a clear indication of the general situation in the country, which suited British interests.¹⁴⁶

1. Muscat was under the rule of Sayyid Turki b. Sa'id, and seemed to be very quiet.

2. Sohar was still beyond his reach and under the power of Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais, and al-Rustaq was in the control of Sayyid Faisal b. Ḥamud, Ibrahim's cousin, who had lately handed over the authority over the town to Sayyid Ibrahim.

3. Shaikh Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali al-Ḥarṭhi was at Samad preparing for an alliance with Ibrahim against Sayyid Turki.

4. All properties which Sayyid 'Azzan's Government had taken had been returned to their proper owners.

5. Trade was booming in the port, while small-pox had spread in Muscat.

6. Sayyid Turki was planning to march against Sohar, and the Ghafiri tribes were planning to meet him to emphasise their allegiance to his authority.

7. The merchants of Muscat had approved of Sayyid Turki's presence, and expressed their feeling by supplying funds of about \$MT 5,000 to his Government.

Given these circumstances, the situation in Muscat was bound to be in favour of Sayyid Turki's recognition by the British. The Governor-General in Council, Mayo Richard, wrote to the Secretary of State for India, George D. Argyll, informing him of his intention to recognise Sayyid Turki as the Sultan of Muscat, and confirming Sayyid Turki's ability to be the Sultan, as he had already started strengthening his position at Muscat.¹⁴⁷ Captain E. C. Ross, the new Political Agent at Muscat, had reported from Muscat two weeks after his arrival there that the whole country was now on the verge of accepting Sayyid Turki as Sultan, this even though Sayyid Ibrahim held Sohar and some parts of the Batinah coast, and was ready to revolt against Sayyid Turki, and the tribes of Oman were now divided into two parties for a fight, while the troops of Wahhabis, who had come from the northern Nejd led by Mahboob bin Jauher, had seized the Buraimi oasis in favour of the Amir Sa'ud b. Faisal.¹⁴⁸

By the end of May 1871, Ross telegraphed the Bombay Government, asking them for urgent recognition of Sayyid Turki as Sultan of Muscat. The recommendation was promptly accepted by the Governor of Bombay, Sir William Fitzgerald, who passed his endorsement to the Viceroy, Richard Mayo, who soon communicated the situation to London, asking for permission to acknowledge the status of Sayyid Turki.¹⁴⁹ On 4th June 1871, the Viceroy also telegraphed to the Secretary of State that he intended to recognise Sayyid Turki as the Sultan of Muscat, and enquiring about his attitude towards this issue.¹⁵⁰

As we have already seen, the Secretary of State entirely concurred with the Political Resident Lewis Pelly's view on the issue of the British recognition of Sayyid Turki b. Said. However, Colonel Pelly had unofficially already recognised him as the

Sultan of the State. In answer to Pelly's communication with the Government of Bombay the Secretary of State sent the Resident a demi-official note regarding the matter of the request of the Governor of Bombay, which reached him through the Political Agent at Muscat, Major Ross, on 11th May 1871. Ross also supplied him with the latest news of Muscat, in which he mentioned that Muscat seemed to be well under the authority of Sayyid Turki, and there were no more troubles or rivalries to be reported from there as yet. If the Government of Bombay were to recognise Sayyid Turki, this move would lead to stability in Muscat and strengthen his position against any disturbances throughout the country. However, the non-recognition of Sayyid by the British was invested with considerable meaning by the tribes of Oman. Accordingly, Sayyid Turki himself was encouraged to send his deputation to the Government of Bombay to request his recognition, but he was advised by the Political Agent at Muscat not to do so, and to wait for the solution of this matter, which fortunately was progressing in his favour.¹⁵¹ The Secretary of State agreed with the suggestion of recognition, and he sent his consent to the Government of India in a telegram dated 9th June 1871.¹⁵² In news reports forwarded by the Government of Bombay on 6th June 1871, it was confirmed that Sayyid Turki had marched against Sohar to free the town from Ibrahim's domination although in fact Sayyid had attacked Sohar by sea. However, resistance from Ibrahim had driven him out and the town remained beyond his reach. In fact while he headed to the north for the purpose of possessing the Batinah coast, but his operation was postponed and he returned to Muscat on 22nd May 1871.¹⁵³ Major Ross believed that on receipt of recognition of Sayyid Turki by the British authorities the tribes of Oman would immediately grant him both moral and armed support.

On 6th June 1871, Edward Ross was instructed by the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, Colonel Pelly, to inform Sayyid Turki that the Viceroy and the Governor-General of India had recognised him as the Sultan of the country. The

British requested the continuation of the same friendly relationship which had existed in the days of his father Sayyid Sa'id bin Sultan, and the Government of India had come to the conclusion that the old amicable relations with Oman would certainly develop favourably under his lordship, and peace and prosperity should be restored to the country. His Excellency the Viceroy had ordered the *Lynx* to go to Muscat, and instructed her Commander to arrange with the Political Agent in Muscat for a salute to be fired in honour of Sayyid Turki.¹⁵⁴ Sayyid Turki did not received that recognition at that time, as he was on another mission on the Batinah coast.

Sayyid Turki was now recognised by the British Government as Sultan of Muscat and its dominions.¹⁵⁵ During the following years, his power was challenged by various conflicts, which required strong and effective action to bring the whole situation under his control. The main challenges to his power had come from his nephew, the ex-Sultan Sayyid Sālim b. Thuwaini, Shaikh Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali al-Ḥarthi and his cousin Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais. However, the most serious challenge to his future sovereignty was to be from his younger brother Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz bin Sa'id, who came to be considered an on-going problem to him throughout his own time in power, and most of his son Sayyid Faisal's reign.

¹ The Imāmate is a religious and political title for the leader of the Government or State which appeared with the appearance of Islam, and had been established in Oman many times since early Islamic history. The head of this State is called the Imam. Oman had many different Imāmates established throughout its history, the first one in 749 was established under Junah b. Qais al-Hinai. From this time onwards Oman had become more familiar with it as the basis of the rule in the country. The Imamate was responsible for Oman's independent status from an early time. Sayyid 'Azzan b. Qais's Imāmate was the seventh in Oman when he was elected by the 'ulema as the legitimate ruler in 1868; this was the last Imamate established by the Al Bū Sa'idi Dynasty, which ended with the death of Sayyid Sa'id b. Sultan in 1856. However, the Imāmate in Oman did not vanish for ever, and it was revived again -May 1913 to July 1920- when the ulema of the interior of Oman elected Shaikh Sālim b. Rashid b. Sulaymān al-Kharūsi as Imām, and declared the deposition of the Sultan Sayyid Faisal b. Turki. The Imāmate of Shaikh Sālim b. Rashid was the strongest during the twentieth century, and was continued with the election of Shaikh Muhammad b. 'Abdullah al-Khalili whose Imāmate lasted until his death in May 1954, this being the last in Oman. For further information, see al-Hashmy, S. *Imam Salim b. Rashid and the Imamate Revival in Oman 1913-1920*. Ph.D. Thesis, the University of Leeds; 1994. pp. 17-23, and the whole of chapter viii. See also al-Salimi, pp. 53-54; Wilkinson, J. C. *The Imamate Tradition of Oman*. London; 1987, especially Part One and Part Four.

² Baily, 1988 vol. i, p. 308.

³ I.O.R. L/P&S/9/50. Translation of a letter from Ḥamad bin Musallem, and all the tribe of Beni Bū Hussun, to Syed Toorki in Bombay. Received and translated on the 13th November, 1868.

⁴ Aitchison, C.U., (ed). *A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads Relating to India and Neighbouring Countries*. vol. xi, p. 274.

⁵ Thomas, B, *Arab Rule under the Al-Bu-Sa'id Dynasty of Oman 1741-1937*, London; 1938, p. 21.

⁶ Anthony, J. D. *Historical and Cultural Dictionary of Oman and the Emirates of Eastern Arabia*, New Jersey; 1976, p. 11.

⁷ Kumar, R. "Note and Memoranda: British Attitude Towards the Ibadiyya Revivalist Movements in East Arabia" *International Studies*, vol. iii, (1962), p. 445.

⁸ Ibid. p. 445.

⁹ I. O. R. L/P&S/9/50. *Letter from H.H. Syud Salim the Sultan of Oman, to Captain G. A. Atkinson, Acting Political Agent at Muscat*. Dated, Muscat 4th Jamada al-Thani, 1285. 21st September, 1868.

¹⁰ I.O.R. L/P&S/9/50. *Letter from the Acting Political Agent in Muscat, to the British Political Resident in the Persian Gulf*. Dated, Muscat 21st September, 1868.

¹¹ I.O.R. L/P&S/9/50. See the same letter.

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- ¹² Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, pp. 481-84.
- ¹³ I.O.R. L/P&S/9/50. *Letter from the Acting Political Agent in Muscat to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf*. Dated Muscat, 21st September, 1868.
- ¹⁴ I.O.R. L/P&S/9/50. Ibid.
- ¹⁵ Townsend, J. *Oman: The making of the modern State*, London; 1977, p. 44.
- ¹⁶ I.O.R. L/P&S/9/50. *Letter from the Acting Political Agent in Muscat, to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf*. Dated Muscat, 22nd September, 1868.
- ¹⁷ Kumar, 1962, vol. iii, pp. 445-446. See also Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 482.
- ¹⁸ al-Salimi, 1978, vol. ii, p. 198.
- ¹⁹ I.O.R. L/P&S/9/50. *Letter from the Acting Political Agent in Muscat to the Secy. to the Govt. Bombay*. Dated Muscat, 13th November, 1868.
- ²⁰ I. O. R. L/P&S/9/50. Ibid.
- ²¹ I. O. R. L/P/&S/9/50. Ibid.
- ²² I.O.R. R/15/6/2. *Political Agency, Muscat. Letters inward and outward January-October, 1869. Political Dept. Bombay Castle. Letters from the Secretary to the Govt. to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf and Political Agent in Muscat*. Dated 5th March, 1869.
- ²³ I.O. R. R/15/6/2. Ibid.
- ²⁴ I. O. R. R/15/6/2. Ibid.
- ²⁵ I. O. R. R/15/6/3. *Political Agency Muscat, letters inward and outward, May-December, 1869. Letter from 'Azzan b. Qais to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf*.
- ²⁶ I.O.R. R. L/P&s/9/50. *Letter from the Acting Political Agent at Muscat, to the [PRPG]*. Dated Muscat, 15th February, 1869. al-Salimi, A.H. *Tuhfat al-A'yan*...vol. ii, pp. 207-212. Also see Skeet, I. *Muscat and Oman; the end of an era*, London; 1974, p. 96.
- ²⁷ Lorimer, 1915, vol, p. 486.
- ²⁸ Allen, C., *Oman: The Modernisation of the Sultanate of Oman*, London; 1987, p. 54.
- ²⁹ Gwader is a small port on the Mekran coast about 250 miles east of Muscat. It had come under the authority of Muscat by the end of the eighteenth century. the population of the district is mostly Baluchi with a small number of the Arabs who

settled there away from disputes in Oman and the rest of the Arabian Peninsula, and existed by fishing and later by smuggling arms to Persian and Indian frontiers. During the period of the nineteenth century the harbour and its district was ruled by the governors of Muscat. In the reign of Sultan Thuwaini, Gwader and the Mekran coast were firmly under his control, through Baluchi chiefs who ensured their cooperation with him. Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz b. Sa'id and Salim b. Thuwaini, installed themselves at Gwader during their disputes with Sultan Turki, who had turned them out from Gwader, and the port has since remained in the possession of the reigning Sultan. The Sultan's annual revenue from this port was nearly £2,000. The authority of Muscat on Gwader and the Mekran coast remained in force until 1958, when it was renounced through the sale by the Sultan of Muscat and Oman Sayyid Sa'id b. Taimoor of the last remaining Oman possession overseas, Gwader on the Mekran coast, to Pakistan. See Kelly, 1968, pp. 13, 556, 835. Hay, R., "The Persian Gulf States and their Boundary Problems", *The Geographical Journal*, vol. cxx, part, 4, (1954), p. 440. and Gurzon, G.N., *Persia and the Persian Question*, London; 1892, pp. 432-33

³⁰ Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 484.

³¹ I.O.R. L/P&S/9/50. *Letter from the Political Agent at Muscat to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf*. Dated Muscat, 12th April, 1869.

³² I.O.R. L/P&S/9/50. *Letter from the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, to the Political Agent in Muscat*. Dated, 13th February, 1869. Also, a *Letter from the Political Agent in Muscat to Secy. to the Govt. Bombay*. Dated Muscat, 19th February, 1869.

³³ I.O.R. L/P&S/9/50. Ibid. Kelly, J.B., *Britain and the Persian Gulf 1795-1880*, Oxford; 1968, p. 685.

³⁴ R.O. vol. i, *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1869-1872*, p. 451.

³⁵ R. O. vol. i, Ibid. p. 452.

³⁶ R. O. vol. i, Ibid. p. 452.

³⁷ R. O. vol. i, Ibid. p. 452.

³⁸ Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 49.

³⁹ Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 486, and al-Salimi, 1978, vol. ii, p. 222.

⁴⁰ al-Salimi, 1978, vol. ii, p. 222. Kelly, 1968, p. 703.

⁴¹ R. O. vol. i, *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1869-72*, p. 461.

⁴² R. O. vol. i, *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1869-72*, p. 462.

⁴³ Ibid. p. 462.

⁴⁴ Kelly, 1968. p. 704.

⁴⁵ Kumar, 1962 vol. iii, p. 449; Kelly, 1968, p. 703.

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- ⁴⁶ R. O. vol. i, *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1869-72*, p. 461.
- ⁴⁷ I. O. R. R/15/6/4. *Despatch, from W. Wedderbury, Acting Secretary to Government, Bombay, to the Secretary to the Government of India. Foreign Department.* Dated Bombay, May, 1871.
- ⁴⁸ I.O.R. R/15/6/4. See the same Despatch.
- ⁴⁹ R. O. *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1869-72*, pp. 463-64.
- ⁵⁰ Ibid. p. 464.
- ⁵¹ Kelly, 1968, pp. 704-705.
- ⁵² Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 486; and Kelly, 1968, p. 705.
- ⁵³ R. O. vol. i, p. 465; Kelly, 1968. p. 705; Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 486.
- ⁵⁴ R. O. vol. i, p. 465.
- ⁵⁵ Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p.486.
- ⁵⁶ Kelly, 1968, p. 705.
- ⁵⁷ I.O.R. L/P&S/9/16. *Letter from Lt. Col. Lewis Pelly, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, to the Secy. to the Govt. Political Dept.* Dated Bushire, 1st August, 1870.
- ⁵⁸ I.O.R. L/P&S/9/16. *Letter from the Secretary to the Govt. Political Dept. to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf Lt. Col. Pelly.* Dated, 28th July, 1870.
- ⁵⁹ I.O.R. L/P/&S/9/16. *Letter from Lt. Colonel Pelly, to the Secretary to the Government Political Department.* Dated Bushire, 1st August, 1870.
- ⁶⁰ I.O.R. L/P/&S/9/16. See the same letter.
- ⁶¹ I.O.R. L/P/&S/9/16. See the same letter.
- ⁶² I.O.R. L/P&S/9/16. *Letter from Col. Pelly to the Secretary to the Government Political Dept.* Dated Bushire, 1st August, 1870.
- ⁶³ I. O. R. L/P&S/9/16. See the same letter.
- ⁶⁴ I. O. R. L/P&S/9/16. *Letter from the Government of Bombay to the Secretary of State for India in Council.* Dated 27th August, 1870.
- ⁶⁵ Kelly, 1968, p. 705.
- ⁶⁶ Ibid. p. 705; and Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 486.

⁶⁷ I. O. R. L/P&S/9/16. *Report from Lt. Col. Pelly, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf to the Secretary to the Govt. Political Dept.* Dated Muscat, 3rd September, 1870.

⁶⁸ I.O.R. L/P/&S/9/16. See the same Report.

⁶⁹ I.O.R. L/P/&S/9/16. *Telegram from Major Way, the Acting Political Agent in Muscat, to Lt. Col. Pelly, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf.* Dated Muscat 23rd August, 1870.

⁷⁰ R.O. 1867-1947. vol. i. *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1869-1872*, p. 469.

⁷¹ I.O. R. L/P&S/9/16. *Report from Lt. Col. Pelly the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, to the Secretary to the Government Political Department.* Dated Muscat, 3rd September, 1870.

⁷² I.O.R. L/P&S/9/16. *Telegram from the Secretary to the Government, Political Department, to Col. Pelly, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf.* Dated August 24th, 1870.

⁷³ I.O.R. L/P/&S/9/16. *Report from Lt. Col., Pelly, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, to the Secretary to the Government. Political Dept.* Dated Muscat, 3rd September, 1870.

⁷⁴ I.O.R. L/P&S/9/16. See the same Report.

⁷⁵ I.O.R. L/P&S/9/16/. See the same Report.

⁷⁶ I.O.R. L/P&S/9/16. See the same Report.

⁷⁷ I. O. R. L/P&S/9/16. See the same Report.

⁷⁸ I. O. R. L/P&S/9/50. *Letter from Saeed b. Khalfan al-Khaleelee, to Lt., Col. Disbrowe the British Political Agent in Muscat.* Dated Muscat, 13th April, 1869.

⁷⁹ I. O. R. L/P&S/9/50. See the same letter.

⁸⁰ I. O. R. L/P&S/9/50. *Letter from Lt. Col. H. Disbrowe, the Political Agent at Muscat, to Shaikh Saeed b. Khalfan Khaleelee.* Dated Muscat, 16th April, 1869.

⁸¹ I. O. R. L/P&S/9/16. *Report from Col. Pelly, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, to the Secy. to the Govt. Political Dept.* Dated 3rd September, 1870.

⁸² I. O. R. L/P&S/9/16. See the same Report.

⁸³ I. O. R. L/P&S/9/16. See the same Report.

⁸⁴ I.O.R. L/P&S/9/16. *Letter from the Secretary to the Government Political Department.* Dated Bombay, 19th August, 1870.

⁸⁵ I.O. R. L/P&S/9/16. See the same Letter.

⁸⁶ I.O. R. L/P&S/9/16. See the same Letter.

⁸⁷ I. O. R. L/P&S/9/16. *Report from Lt. Col. Pelly the PRPG, to the Secy. to the Govt. Political Dept.* Dated Muscat, 3rd Sept., 1870.

⁸⁸ I. O. R. L/P&S/9/16. See the Same Report.

⁸⁹ al-Salimi, 1978, vol. ii, p. 219.

⁹⁰ I. O. R. L/P&S/9/16. See the same Report ...Dated, 3rd September, 1870.

⁹¹ I. O. R. L/P&S/9/16. See the same Report.

⁹² I. O. R. L/P&S/9/16. See the same Report.

⁹³ I.O. R. L/P&S/9/16. See the same Report.

⁹⁴ I. O. R. L/P&S/9/16. *Letter from the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf to the Political Department Bombay.* Dated Muscat, 11th September, 1870.

⁹⁵ I. O. R. L/P&S/9/16. See the same letter.

⁹⁶ I. O. R. L/P&S/9/16. See the same letter.

⁹⁷ I. O. R. L/P&S/9/16. See the same letter.

⁹⁸ I. O. R. L/P&S/9/16. *Letter from the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf to the Political Agent at Muscat.* Dated Muscat, 11th September, 1870.

⁹⁹ I. O. R. L/P&S/9/16. See the same letter.

¹⁰⁰ I. O. R. L/P&S/9/16. *Letter from the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf to the Secy. to the Govt. Political Department.* Dated Bushire, 16th September, 1870.

¹⁰¹ R. O. vol. i, *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1869-1872*, p. 471.

¹⁰² Hawley, D., *Oman and its Renaissance*, London; 1990, p. 46. See also Kelly, 1968, p. 706. Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 486.

¹⁰³ Badger, J.P., *History of Imams and Seyyids of Oman*, London; 1871, pp. cxvi-cxvii; Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 486; Kelly, 1968, p. 706.

¹⁰⁴ Townsend, J., *Oman: The Making of a Modern State*, London; 1977. p. 44.

¹⁰⁵ R. O. vol. i, *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1869-1672*, p. 470-71, and Colomb, R.N., *Slave catching in the Indian Ocean*, London; 1968, p. 131.

¹⁰⁶ R. O. vol. i. *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1869-72*, p. 471.

¹⁰⁷ Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 486, Kelly, 1968, p. 706.

¹⁰⁸ al-Salimi, 1978, vol. i, pp. 223-225; Badger, 1971, p. cxvii; Kelly, 1968, p. 706.

¹⁰⁹ Miles, S. B., "On the border of the Great Desert: a Journey in Oman", *The G.J.* vol. xxxvi, no. iv, 1910, p. 419.

¹¹⁰ Ibid. p. 419; see also Lorimer, 1915, vol. i. p. 486.

¹¹¹ al-Salimi, 1978, vol. ii, p. 225; Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 486; and Kelly, 1968, p. 706.

¹¹² al-Salimi, 1978, vol. ii, p. 225.

¹¹³ Badger, 1971, p. cxviii; al-Salimi, 1978, vol. ii, p. 225; Kelly, 1968, p. 706.

¹¹⁴ R. O. vol. i. *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1869-72*, p. 472.

¹¹⁵ Ibid. pp. 472-73.

¹¹⁶ Ibid. R. O. vol. i, p. 472. Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 486; Kelly, 1968, p. 706.

¹¹⁷ R. O. vol. i. *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1869-72*, p. 472. Kelly, 1968, p. 707.

¹¹⁸ R.O. Ibid. p. 472; Kelly, 1968, p. 707.

¹¹⁹ R. O. vol. i. *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1869-72*, p. 472.

¹²⁰ I.O.R. R/15/6/4. *Despatch from W. Wedderburn, the Acting Secretary to the Government of Bombay, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Foreign Department.* Dated Bombay, May, 1871.

¹²¹ I. O. R. R/15/6/4. See the same Despatch.

¹²² Ibid. p. 472. For a longer explanation of this issue, see al-Salimi, 1978, vol. ii, pp. 225-226. and Kelly, 1968, p. 707.

¹²³ R. O. vol. i. *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1869-72*, p. 473. Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 487.

¹²⁴ R.O. Ibid. p. 473.

¹²⁵ Kelly, 1968, p. 707.

¹²⁶ Ibid. p. 707.

¹²⁷ al-Salimi, 1978, vol. ii, p. 225. R. O. vol. i, *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1869-1872*, p. 473.

¹²⁸ al-Salimi, 1978, vol. ii, p. 226. and R. O. *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1869-1872*, p. 473.

¹²⁹ al-Salimi, 1978, vol. ii, p. 226.

¹³⁰ I.O. R. L/P&S/9/17. *Report from Colonel Pelly, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, to the Secretary to the Government Political Dept.* Dated Muscat, 13th February, 1871.

¹³¹ R. O. vol. i, *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1869-1872*, p. 474.

¹³² Ibid. p. 474-75.

¹³³ Ibid p. 475.

¹³⁴ Kelly, 1968, p. 709.

¹³⁵ R. O. vol. i. *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1869-72*, p. 475.

¹³⁶ Kelly, 1968, p. 711.

¹³⁷ R. O. vol. i, *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1869-72*, p. 487.

¹³⁸ Ibid. p. 478.

¹³⁹ Ibid. pp. 488-89.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid. pp. 488-89.

¹⁴¹ Ibid. pp. 487-88.

¹⁴² Kelly, 1968, p. 712.

¹⁴³ R. O. vol. i, *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1869-72*, p. 476.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid. vol. i, p. 476.

¹⁴⁵ During the time of Ross as the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, the power of the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf reached its culmination. The Residency system was not highly complicated during the late 19th Century. In 1873, the Resident was removed from being in a position of in-between control of the Government of Bombay and placed directly under the Calcutta Foreign Department. This step meant that the Resident's decisions or suggestion from now onwards would be submitted directly to Calcutta. For more information, see Landen, R. G. *Oman since 1856: Disruptive Modernisation in a Traditional Arab Society*, New Jersey; 1967, p. 210.

¹⁴⁶ R. O. vol. i, *Precis of Muscat Affair 1869-72*, p. 476; al-Salimi, 1978, vol. ii, p. 233.

¹⁴⁷ I. O. R. L/P&S/9/8. *Letter from the Governor-General in Council, to the Secretary of State for India*. Dated 3 April, 1871.

¹⁴⁸ Kelly, 1968, p. 715.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid. pp. 715-16.

¹⁵⁰ R. O. vol. i. *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1869-72*, p. 477.

¹⁵¹ Ibid. p. 477.

¹⁵² Ibid. p. 477. See also Aitchison, C. U., *A Collection of Treaties Engagements and Sanads Relating to India and Neighbouring Countries*, vol. 11. New Delhi; 1983, p. 275.

¹⁵³ al-Salimi, 1978, vol. ii, pp. 231-32. R. O. vol. i. *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1869-72*, p. 477.

¹⁵⁴ R. O. vol. i, *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1869-72*, p. 477.

¹⁵⁵ The recognition of Sayyid Turki had taken place in early June, 1871; however, Sayyid Turki never knew about it, and Ross was instructed to inform him when the Sayyid came back from his operation against Sohar. Sayyid Turki was in Muscat by the end of June 1871, and he remained there until 10th July 1871, before he started his second mission against Sohar, and his recognition was recommended without delay and sanctioned by the Secretary of State in the same month, who communicated it to Turki himself only on 8th August 1871. Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 499; Kelly, 1968, p. 716; R.O. vol. i, *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1869-72*, pp. 478-79.

Sayyid Turki's successes and British support

4.1. Sultan Turki's Character

Sayyid Turki b. Sa'id b Sultan. b. Ahmed Al Bū Sa'idi is considered one of the paramount figures in the modern history of Oman. Sayyid Turki was the person who restored the true line of Sayyid Sa'id bin Sultan in the Al Bū Sa'id Dynasty, after it was lost for nearly three years during the period of Sayyid 'Azzan b. Qais. Sayyid Turki was the first one to confine the dynasty's marriage to the Al Bū Sa'id family. Accordingly, on 6th August 1881, Sayyid Faisal b. Turki, the second son of the Sultan Turki, married his cousin Sayyidah Aleyyah, the daughter of Sayyid Thuwaini b. Sa'id.¹

Sayyid Turki, was in prison many times during his lifetime, during which he was encouraged to capture power in Oman after the death of his father Sayyid Sa'id bin Sultan the Great. As a result of his activities Sayyid Turki suffered a great deal and experienced much hardship in his early political life. He was imprisoned three times as a result of his attempts to rule the country. The first time was during his brother Sayyid Thuwaini b. Sa'id's reign when he was his Wali for Sohar; this position gave him strong support among the surrounding tribes, which persuaded him to claim the independence of Sohar and its dominions on the Batinah coast. However, Sultan Sayyid Thuwaini, as we have already seen in the earlier discussion, considered this a revolt against his authority, if not an attempt to overthrow him and seize the country from him.

The second time was later during Sayyid Thuwaini's reign when the Sultan was preparing to invade Zanzibar; Sayyid Turki took this as a favourable opportunity to move with the support of the Sohar people against Muscat and to replace his brother

in power while the latter was away from Muscat. This move ended in failure almost immediately and led him to being imprisoned. The third time was when his nephew Sayyid Sālim b. Thuwaini murdered his father in Sohar. Sayyid Turki, who had had amicable relations with his older brother, had been prepared in Sohar for an operation for him against the Wahhabis. He was sent to jail for the third time, followed by an exile to Bombay.

However, after all this long period of struggle for the possession of power in Oman, Sayyid Turki eventually succeeded, when in June 1871, the British authorities in both London and India officially recognised him as Sultan of Oman, and admitted his sovereignty over the whole country and its people.

When Sayyid became the official ruler of the State, he was only 30 years of age. He was a mild and liberal character with a diplomatic manner. He was patient in the face of difficulty, religious, serious, dignified, and unassuming.² He showed great respect to the people of the country, even those who opposed with him, hated disturbances to the peace in Oman and worked hard to bring peace to his society whatever the cost. All these qualifications earned him great popularity inside and outside his country over the years.

The Sultan's impeccable manner and character were confirmed in many descriptions submitted by travellers who visited the country during his rule. Geary, the editor of the *Times of India* who visited Muscat in March 1878 and met the Sultan in his palace, described him as the maintainer or the representative in his life of the simplicity of the Sultans. He said:

"... When they entered the palace they met with six Arabs there, one of the simplest of these was the Sultan Sayyid Turki b. Said, who was unlike the rest, had no turban, wore a small white Skull-Cap and was very plainly dressed. He communicated with his guests very politely, and the Sultan was about 36 years old..."³

Denis de Rivoyet, who visited Muscat in 1880, also gave the impression in *Obock Mascate Bouchire* (Paris, 1883) that Sultan Turki was a very respectful person, who was interested in meeting people on an official level, but away from the formality of his lifestyle. He tried to live a normal life, and at the same time he did not ignore or neglect his personal safety. He maintained the state in good order and it was his ambition to establish peace all over the country.⁴ He reorganised his army and made strengthened himself against all aggression. Under his authority the country prospered and Muscat grew considerably as a trading city.⁵

The British Political Residents in the Persian Gulf, Lt. Colonel Pelly and later Lt. Colonel Ross, were in agreement that Sultan Turki's reign embodied the central element of stability which the country needed. Ross, in one of his letters to the British Political Resident in the Persian Gulf when he was the Agent in Muscat, stated that the country needed a very capable and strong sultan, with the command over considerable revenues in order to consolidate the unity of the Sultanate and break the animosity of the shaikhs.⁶ When Sultan Turki died in June 1888, Ross was the British Political Resident in the Gulf. They had shared a long acquaintance and he describes the Sultan's death in the following words:

"The death of Sayyid Turki is felt to be a misfortune to Oman; for although his rule was by no means vigorous, he was well skilled in managing Arabs, and usually mild and liberal... His well-known loyalty to the British Government was recognised by H. Majesty's conferring on his Highness in 1856 the Grand Cross of the State of India, and at the same time the British Government undertook to afford him active support during his lifetime in case of insurrections and attack on Muscat. This announcement ensured the maintenance of peace at Muscat so long as Sayyid Turki should continue the reign and makes his loss the more felt. During his later years Sayyid Turki suffered much from ill-health and his sufferings, impairing his mind and judgement, rendered him prone to superstition, and the painful suspicions arising therefrom embittered his last days".⁷

Though Sayyid Turki did not have enough support to deal with the troubles at the commencement of his reign, he was a mild and liberal-minded ruler, and he

understood how to deal with the Arab tribal Shaikhs who were under his influence.⁸ He built a firm relationship throughout his reign with the British, who always supported him against unprovoked aggression. His close relations with the British helped them to be more effective and influential in the affairs of Oman, while the Sultan considered their influence to be a step towards the protection of his position in power, helped by their support for him in crucial times.

Whatever the British authority's attitude towards his sovereignty, Sultan Turki remained in a position in which he served his own interests in the country's internal affairs, without any actual British intervention. In fact the Sultan's health problems at the beginning of his rule affected his attitude to his people and the country, and he preferred temporary retirement and left the State under the control of his younger brother, Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz bin Sa'id. In the period from 1871-1875, the Sultan's weakness was reflected in many areas of his life, especially the political side when he became feeble and too weak to rule the country. Under the above circumstances he left for Gwader, which was one of his provinces on the Persian Coast, but when he felt that his brother was planning to overthrow him permanently he promptly left Gwader for Oman to deal with the issue.

4.2. Sayyid Turki and the Zanzibar Subsidy

Although the British supported his authority and they approved of him as leader of the country, he gained no effective support from them in his early moves against his opponents. Sayyid Turki was continually troubled by the threats to his position, especially during the first period of his rule. The general situation in the country was precarious. Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais was holding Sohar with a large part of the Batinah coast, stretching from al-Masna'ah north of Muscat to Shinas, 284 kilometres further north, and he was awaiting a suitable opportunity to launch his attack against Muscat. Consequently, Sultan Turki's first objective was to establish his control over the

Batinah coast. It is clear that a shortage of funds played a major part in preventing the Sultan from accomplishing this task at once. This situation was relieved somewhat when in July 1872 he wrote to his brother in Zanzibar, Sayyid Barghash b. Sa'id, claiming payment of the Zanzibar subsidy under threat of invasion: Sayyid Barghash was induced by the British to pay the Sultan of Muscat a certain amount, but he sent him only \$MT. 5,000⁹

Sayyid Turki considered that unification between Muscat and Zanzibar still remained a possibility, but whatever the situation this project could not and would not happen without British approval, which was by no means certain. The acquiescence of Sayyid Barghash to the British demands on slave trading allowed Sayyid Barghash to have their recognition of his power in Zanzibar as Sultan in August 1871, and demolished Sultan Turki's hope of having Zanzibar under his authority.¹⁰ Accordingly, all succession threats from Muscat to Zanzibar were set aside permanently from that point onwards. It was the British Government's determination not to immediately accept Sultan Turki's attempts to simultaneously become the ruler of Oman and to take steps for the unification between Muscat and Zanzibar.¹¹ Despite even his political position, Sultan Turki was unable, through lack of forces or funds, to turn the fleet to Zanzibar's Isle from Oman into reality. Sayyid Barghash soon realised that he must have a good understanding with the British, as his brother Sayyid Majid had done before, to hold his own in East Africa.¹² But since the payment of the subsidy to Muscat had been approved by Barghash, relations between the two brothers had improved enormously, even though the Zanzibar subsidy, from April 1873, was paid by the Government of India and then later paid from London.

During the time of Sir Bartle Frere's visit to Muscat for the discussion of the Slave Trade Treaty with Oman the British authorities refused to pay the subsidy unless Sayyid Turki signed the Treaty with the British Government prohibiting the traffic in slaves. The Treaty was submitted and the award of the subsidy was confirmed by the

British Government, by authorising the Muscat Government to draw \$MT 40,000 immediately and \$MT 20,000 three months later from the Treasury of the British Muscat Agency.¹³ As the great obstacle to the consolidation of Sultan Turki's power and the building of a peaceful administration in Oman was his need of money, the Government of India was determined to guarantee him the payment of the subsidy with arrears from the date he took power in Muscat, and they confirmed to him that, as long as he remained on good terms and respected all the agreements with them, the subsidy of \$MT 40,000 would be paid to him every year during his time in power.¹⁴ The payment of this subsidy was made regularly and after the Sultan's death in June 1888, it continued to be paid to his son and successor Sayyid Faisal without any real delay on the bases of understanding and the former friendship with which it was paid to Sultan Turki.¹⁵ It is worth noting that, the financial difficulties which held Sayyid Turki in Muscat and prevented a major strike against his rivals in the country also affected these rivals, preventing them from undertaking any large-scale operations against Muscat for some time.

The continuation of the Zanzibar subsidy was really the major point which helped the Sultan to impose stability and peace in the country, and sustained the Government of Muscat. When Sir Bartle Frere had contacted the Viceroy and the Governor-General of India with regard to this question, he confirmed that any delay or interruption in the payment of this income would seriously damage the peace in Oman on the one hand, and on the other hand, it would decrease British power to protect Zanzibar and their trade against the effects of slavers and their illegal trade, a trade that British Indian subjects were very involved in.¹⁶ In fact the British authorities in Zanzibar had full power to prevent any illegal action being taken by traders or even the Government of Zanzibar itself. But the main issue for the Government of India was to influence Sultan Turki's power, and he saw no harm in accepting this policy as long

as he enjoyed the control of his country's affairs without real British interference in the day-to-day affairs of his Government.

Notwithstanding these considerations, Sultan Turki did not wait until the solution of the financial affairs, but he started very soon to prepare for his move against Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais, in order to regain Muscat control over the Batinah coast. In his subsequent campaign Sultan Turki was exposed to an invasion by the ex-Sultan, Sayyid Sālim b. Thuwaini.

4.3. The Sultan's Campaign against Ibrahim

4.3.1. *Sayyid Turki's action against Sohar*

When Sayyid Turki became the ruler of Oman, Muscat, Matrah and Sur fell under his power at once, and many other places in the interior of Oman accepted his authority as well. Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais was in Sohar, where he had managed to impose his authority upon the Batinah coast between Shinaṣ and al-Masna'ah. Al-Rustaq was under the control of his cousin Sayyid Faisal b. Ḥamud; al-Buraimi Fort had been re-occupied by a Wahhabi force.¹⁷ But the most serious problem for the Sultan was the appearance of his nephew the ex-Sultan Sayyid Sālim b. Thuwaini, who had been living in exile at Qishm.¹⁸

On 10th July 1871, Lt. Colonel Ross, the British Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, reported that the Sultan had resumed his operations against the Batinah coast, and against Ibrahim in particular. At this time the British authorities in Muscat had no gun-boat in the harbour to protect their subjects from any hostilities by the Sultan's opponent. The *Lynx* had left Muscat on 30th July 1871, and the *Bullfinch*, which had been instructed to take its place, had not yet arrived in Muscat.¹⁹

The recovery of Sohar seemed to be the first task for the Sultan. At this stage the Sultan had already launched two unsuccessful attacks on Sohar, one in May and

another in June 1871. On 6th August he sailed on board his steamer *al-Rahmani* for the port of Sohar to take possession of this port, but this mission ended in failure as well. The Sultan then extended his operations towards Shinaṣ, and succeeded in taking it from Sayyid Ibrahim and bringing it under his authority.²⁰ Liwa was the second target of this operation, where the Shaikh of Bani Yaas tribe and Dubai, Maktum b. Rashid, landed with 70 of his men just outside the town, acting in concert with the Sultan's troops.²¹ The fort of the town was held for Ibrahim b. Qais by the Wali Mohammed b. Said al-Hinai who was at this time in Sohar with Ibrahim, but when he heard about the Sultan's expedition against Liwa he soon sailed towards the fort of Liwa accompanied by forty men from Sohar. As soon as he arrived there, he found that most of the town had been captured by the Sultan's force, and entered into a battle with them. He was killed in the operation and his men were defeated, and the town became the Sultan's possession.²² The operation also succeeded against many other towns on the coast, like al-Masan'ah, al-Suwaiq, and al-Khaburah which also became the Sultan's possessions.²³

Sultan Turki then decided to attack Sohar again, and this time managed to seize it. A breach was made in the wall of the town and some of the Sultan's troops quickly entered, and a compromise was proposed by the Sultan. Under this settlement Sayyid Turki agreed to leave the town in the control of Sayyid Ibrahim for the time being, and added to it the coastline from Shinaṣ southward to al-Khaburah. The remaining places on the coast, including al-Suwaiq and al-Masna'ah, would remain in the possession of the Sultan.²⁴ In accordance with this agreement, the Political Agent at Muscat reported the matter to the British Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, Colonel Pelly, who on 8th August 1871 informed the Government of Bombay about the new situation in Oman. However, Pelly felt that this agreement was not completely in favour of the Sultan, and his comment on it was as follows:

"If this a final arrangement, and Ibrahim holds that strong fortress as an independent command, I cannot think the Sultanate advantageous for His Highness' interests as ruler of Oman" ²⁵

The Sultan was unhappy with the provisions of the settlement as well, when he admitted Ibrahim's right to rule some part of Oman, and also agreed to partition Oman with his rival. In fact this settlement did not last long, and the Sultan took it as a transitional stage before the next struggle. He also accepted this agreement because he was looking for peace and stability for his dominions. Another factor which caused the Sultan to enter into this contract was that he had not yet been told about his official recognition by the British Government, which he discovered only on 8th August 1871, after his return from the Batinah coast. However, the Sultan could see that the situation would never be settled by this understanding, as long as Sayyid Ibrahim ruled Sohar independently.

4.3.2. Ibrahim's and Sālim's alliance against Sayyid Turki

The disturbances between the two men continued, and the compromise outlined above failed to bring the disorder in the country to an end. Sohar was the most important issue in the Sultan's policy for the next period. His next most important concern was to give the British his loyal cooperation. This benefited Sayyid Turki by providing a suitable and convenient way for him to prevent hostilities on the one hand, benefited the British who were looking for peace in Oman in order to protect their subjects and interests in a country which had many conflicting parties seeking control. The British felt that securing trade in the region would benefit the British Indian traders in Muscat, as well as those who resided in other ports on Omani soil.

In fact the idea of the partition of Muscat's territories between two rivals was not new; but when the British interfered through Lord Canning's Arbitration, the separation of Sohar from Muscat was not considered advisable. At this time the Sultan communicated with the British Political Resident in the Persian Gulf with

regard to his position in the Musandam district, saying that he intended to send a vessel to Khasab to confirm his authority there.²⁶ Pelly accordingly discussed the issue with the Government of Bombay by sending them a telegram on 15th September 1871.²⁷ The Government of India sent their reply on 22nd of the same month with their approval, allowing Musandam to be Muscat territory, so long as the maritime boundary was accepted as five kilometres from shore, for the purposes of maritime peace.²⁸ By now hostilities between Sultan Turki and Ibrahim b. Qais were threatening, and the Political Agent, Major Ross, informed the Political Resident about the new situation in Oman. The Resident was soon instructed by the Government of Bombay to proceed to Muscat, with an authorisation to use his authority to prevent the renewal of hostilities.²⁹ The gun-boat *Lynx* was also instructed to move towards Muscat to support Pelly's appearance there.³⁰ The reason for the British activities was that they felt that their interests would be threatened if they did not respond promptly.

Sayyid Turki knew exactly what the intention of Sayyid Ibrahim was, namely that as soon as he was in a position to attack Muscat and overthrow him, he would not hesitate to do so. Sayyid Turki himself was preparing for this

In December 1871, Sultan Turki proceeded on board his steamer *al-Rahmani* to al-Khaburah, which had been returned to the Sultan's authority by the al-Hawasinah tribe there.³¹ On December 31st 1871 the Sultan moved troops against Sohar under the command of Badr b. Saif (the son of Saif b. Sulaymān, who had captured Muscat in February 1871 for him during the war against Sayyid 'Azzan b. Qais) who now surprised Sayyid Ibrahim near Sohar. But his force was defeated with a loss of 30 lives and 200 prisoners. The Sultan recaptured al-Khaburah fort again on 2nd January 1872, and a new garrison was installed for the security of the town.³² The Sultan despatched a force under the Wali Thuwaini b. Mohammed to reinforce his position on the Batinah coast in general, and in this town in particular. With regard to this events, the British Political Resident in the Persian Gulf and the Agent in Muscat,

Major Ross, were agreed that this action was an internal affair entirely and they should not interfere unless British subjects or interests were exposed to major danger. On 5th January the Political Agent wrote to the Resident in the Gulf about the new attempt which had been made by Sayyid Ibrahim to re-establish himself in al-Khaburah's affairs.³³ Immediately, Ibrahim retreated to Sohar where he stayed watching for the possibility of launching a new attack against the Sultan's territories on the coast. Clearly the previous agreement between Sayyid Turki and Ibrahim was insufficient to prevent the two men from fighting, and the differences between them remained active and strong enough to cause further hostilities.

The Sultan of Muscat's troubles caused him anxiety and insecurity. While he was concentrating his activities against Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais, the ex-Sultan Sālim b. Thuwaini suddenly appeared in Sohar with the intention of establishing an alliance with Ibrahim to rise in opposition to Sultan Turki. On this occasion Major Ross communicated with the British Political Resident in the Persian Gulf at Bushire by telegram on 21st February 1872, informing him of the arrival of Sayyid Sālim and his plot with Ibrahim. Sālim was thinking of making a start from Sur, and while the Sultan was expected to sail to Sur, Sultan Turki left for Gwader but did not stay for long.³⁴ On 24th of the same month, the Agent sent a telegram to Bushire again, confirming that Sālim had already landed at Sur, saying that the Muscat Government was disturbed by this movement and appealing for action against him by the British authorities in the Gulf.³⁵

Lieutenant Colonel Pelly, in his correspondence with the Government of Bombay, had spoken of the embarrassing condition of the Sultan's finances, the intrigues of Sayyid Sālim, and the movements of Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais to the al-Batinah coast in order to confirm his authority in Sohar and its district.³⁶ He expressed his opinion that it was the British authorities' responsibility to offer all lawful protection to the British Indian subjects in Oman. He also mentioned that, as

the Sultan was recognised as the ruler of Muscat and its dominions, the British Government of India would ultimately expect from him that their subjects within Muscat territories should be treated in conformity with the law, and if any damage to their right or property took place, reparation would be required.³⁷

As soon as the news of Sālim's attempt reached the Sultan, he proceeded towards Sur on 19th February 1872, on board his vessel *al-Rahmani*. After heading along the coast southward to Muscat he landed at Sur on the 23rd February.³⁸ The Sultan's objective was to prevent cooperation between Sālim and Ibrahim establishing a base in this town and gathering the support of the Janabah against him. Sayyid Sālim, who had already landed in Sohar, and had held a meeting with Ibrahim relative to this question, also managed to make a landing in Qalhat, 20 km north of Sur, accompanied by his brother Sayyid Hareb b. Thuwaini and a few followers.³⁹

The Political Agent confirmed in a telegram from Muscat to Lt. Colonel Pelly the arrival of Sayyid Sālim at Sur, and that the Sultan was now in Sur to watch his nephew's actions. Sayyid Sālim had escaped to Ja'alan on the Sultan's arrival there, but no uprising had yet been reported from Ja'alan.⁴⁰ The Sultan remained in Sur for nearly a week, and then returned to Muscat on 29th February, leaving the situation there pacified, while Sayyid Sālim was still in Ja'alan.⁴¹ The Political Resident in the Gulf, in his communication with the Government of Bombay, confirmed that the Sultan had received reliable information that when Sayyid Sālim arrived in Sur he was accompanied by about 100 men, and said that Sayyid Turki was asking for a steamer in his support. Sālim's intention to re-capture power in Oman was associated with an invitation from the Hinawi tribes, who persuaded him to leave Qishm for Oman as soon as he could.⁴² The Government of India, however, were only interested in seeing the British subjects in those areas safe and protected. Pelly was instructed as usual not to interfere in the internal quarrels of Oman except in so far as British interests were threatened. The Sultan's request for sea support from the British was

not agreed to at this stage. The Sultan was in real difficulties, caused by the shortage of money, Sayyid Ibrahim's activities on the north coast of Oman, and the dispute with Shaikh Ṣaliḥ b. 'Alī in al-Sharqiyyah.

The Government of Bombay confirmed their opinion to the Resident with regard to Sayyid Sālim's move, which they thought to have no prospect of success against Muscat under these circumstances. However, as the ongoing shortage of money on the part of Sultan Turki continued, the Bombay Government feared there would be no improvement in the present situation in Oman. The British Resident Pelly strongly urged the Government of India to offer the necessary money to the Sultan, as it was to the British Government's advantage to have a strong government in Oman.⁴³ The Government of India's response towards this matter confirmed for the British Political Resident that the Governor-General in Council expressed his view that the arrangement by which Muscat was to receive an annual subsidy of \$MT 40,000 from Zanzibar should be continued, and would strongly urge an early decision to confirm it.⁴⁴

By now the situation in the Sultan's dominions was troubled by attempts by Sayyid Sālim b. Thuwaini, operating from his base in Ja'alan, to seize Sur, but this endeavour ended without success.⁴⁵ However, he remained in a position to take the field against the Sultan on the south coast of Oman.⁴⁶ The trouble in the north was created by Sayyid Ibrahim as he was planning to regain Liwa. The Sultan had written on this subject to the British Political Agent, Major Ross, that Sayyid Ibrahim would attempt to attack Liwa by sea and had already sent a gun in one of his dhows from Sohar to the town, which was considered to be the Sultan's possession. The Sultan requested the Political Agent to prevent him from launching an attack against it by sea, and mentioned to the Agent that this task must be regarded as going against the British authorities' desires in the region, which were concerned with protecting the maritime

peace.⁴⁷ Sayyid Turki gave the Agent a clear indication that he would not accept British non-intervention under these circumstances

Notwithstanding, on 8th February 1872, an Official News Report by the British Political Agent from Muscat stated that, during the last two weeks of February, before these troubles began, calmness and tranquillity had existed in all provinces of Oman.⁴⁸ The Muscat Custom House had changed hands, and the Sultan was also trying to establish a good understanding with his brother in Zanzibar, Sayyid Barghash, by sending him an envoy with a present of horses, in order to urge him to pay the subsidy since he was in financial trouble.⁴⁹

4.3.3. *The British involvement in the dispute*

Sayyid Ibrahim's activities were interrupted by the actions of the Sultan, who complained to the British Political Agent in Muscat about Ibrahim's behaviour in using the sea to attack his possession in Liwa. Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais communicated with the Political Agent in Muscat regarding this issue, when he wrote to him on 30th April 1872, saying that his envoys, Shaikhs Khamis b. Sulaymān and Rashid b. Humaid interviewed the Political Resident, Colonel Pelly, regarding the resolution of the situation by the interference of the Government of India. They expressed their feeling that the prohibition of hostilities by sea and of the transmission of armaments by sea should be applied equally to the Sultan's marine operations and that they would not accept it being against them alone.⁵⁰ In fact the British Government supported the Sultan's claims upon the Batinah coast, as they considered him the recognised ruler of the country while Ibrahim remained to them a dissident. The Sultan himself considered the main objective for him was the control of the coast, and he had been effective in achieving this goal. To achieve this task he was prepared to spend most of his Zanzibar subsidy to purchase the loyalty of the tribal leaders on the one hand, and on the other hand, to force his opponents to comply with his authority, using the

fortifications of his possessions on the coast and strengthening the power of his garrisons as well. As a result of his actions the Sultan would undoubtedly face a united front from his enemies in future.

Pelly was now instructed by the Government of Bombay to proceed to Muscat. Soon after his arrival he sent his report on 13th April giving a statement of the various parties' attitude in the country. He indicated that Sayyid Sālim was operating in Bediyyah, Shaikh Ṣaliḥ b. 'Alī was planning and waiting for his opportunity in Ibra 178 km. south west of Muscat, Sayyid Ibrahim operating near Sohar, and the Shaikh of Abu Dhabi had seized al-Buraimi. The Sultan was holding Muscat and its territories and Sur, with some part of the country around, with a force of about 3,000 to 4,000 men, chiefly Ghafirīs.⁵¹ Pelly wanted to proceed towards Sohar in response to the violation of the rights of the British subjects in Sohar by Ibrahim b. Qais, in accordance with the order of the Government of Bombay. By this time Ibrahim was away from Sohar, but the Resident took evidence from the British subjects as to their losses, then he warned the inhabitants to leave within 24 hours and threatened bombardment if the demands for redress were not satisfied within that time.⁵² Sultan Turki was now on an expedition in the interior of Oman against the Bani Ruwahah tribe for the murder of Muhammed b. Sa'id, a chief of the Al Bū Sa'id there. This had been in revenge for the Sultan's action regarding the imprisonment and death of Shaikh Sa'id b. Khalfan al-Khalili.⁵³

Colonel Pelly was furious at Ibrahim's action in plundering a craft belonging to British traders and imprisoning three of the traders. Sultan Turki was not yet able to impose his power over Ibrahim, or to control the situation successfully, but these claims, amounting to \$MT 2,255, were subsequently paid by Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais.⁵⁴ Sayyid Ibrahim was unable to pay the whole amount at once, but paid only half, and promised to pay the remaining half. He accepted this solution in a written reply, and promised good conduct for the future.⁵⁵ Colonel Lewis Pelly had

communicated with the Government of Bombay regarding the action he had taken in a letter dated 6th May 1872. He stated that in the event of Sayyid Ibrahim's refusal to surrender the town to the Sultan's power his intention immediately after receiving the instructions of the Bombay Government had been to bombard Sohar.⁵⁶ In the reply of the Indian Government to the action of the Resident, there was total agreement with his proceeding to Sohar and his action in commanding redress for the violation of the rights of the British subjects by Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais.⁵⁷

Sultan Turki by now had been seen to use an approach dependent on British support for the settlement of his disputes. He was in a position to lean on the assistance of the Government of India to cover some of his difficulties. The Sultan was at this stage in favour of British assistance which would undoubtedly provide him with a combination of military support against his enemies in a time of emergency, and of course support the regular payment of the Zanzibar subsidy. The Sultan had come to the conclusion that if the British were on his side, many of his difficulties would be sorted out with only a warning from them.

When Sayyid Sālim b. Thuwaini wrote to the Political Agent in Muscat, Major Ross, about his intention of advancing either against Muscat or Sur, the Agent instructed him to remain at Ja'alan, and that any attack against the Sultan's possessions would not be approved. At this time the Sultan was in desperate need of support from the British authorities in Muscat. Ibrahim b. Qais had taken Shinaş and was besieging Liwa, but the former action persuaded the Sultan to send his commander Badr b. Saif, who defeated Ibrahim's troops and regained the towns of Shinas and Majees.⁵⁸ Ibrahim then escaped to Sohar.

Consequently, it became a feature of cooperation between the British and the Sultan of Oman that the British authorities in the Gulf instructed the Royal Navy to have a man-of-war continuously at anchor off the Muscat coast, to ensure that no

attack against Muscat would be permitted at any time under any circumstances. In fact such proceedings would undoubtedly have involved them directly in the affairs of Oman for the protection of their interests in Oman and the possible commercial consequences. There was a large increase in the amount of British trade and the development of the economic activities within the Gulf during the period 1862 to 1872. Most of the profits were accumulated by the British and certain other Europeans as well as their agents, and resident Indian merchants. Estimated long-distance commerce in the Persian Gulf was worth roughly £5,000,000 during the year 1866, and there was a sharp increase in Gulf trade during the following years.⁵⁹ For instance, the period 1872 to 1876 witnessed a decided increase in the trade between Muscat and India, and the total increase of exports in 1876 ran to \$MT 281,050 with imports reaching \$MT 209,765.⁶⁰ However, the fact remained that the British authorities in the Gulf had been strictly instructed not to become involved in any action in Muscat affairs and to keep the peace undisturbed. However, the protection of their interests and the safety of their subjects had become their top priority in the country.

4.4. The British attempt to pacify the situation in Oman

Colonel Pelly's telegram to the Government of India on 10th June 1872 informed them that the Sultan of Muscat earnestly desired some form of British mediation between himself and Sayyid Sālim b. Thuwaini, whose position had deteriorated gradually because of the desertion of his followers.⁶¹ The Sultan recognised that if he had the British authorities assistance in his claim, he would be in a position in which he need not fear any threat by any coalition against his sovereignty. However, the engagement of good understanding between the Sultan and the British Government had nothing to do with his integrity and independence. This was confirmed for the Government of India in August 1872 by the Secretary to the Government, who referred them to the agreement entered into on 10th March 1862 between the British Government and the French Republic, which bound both parties reciprocally to

respect the independence of the sultanates of Muscat and Zanzibar.⁶² On 21st August 1872 the British Resident in the Persian Gulf received a report from the British Political Agent in Muscat in which he stated that, during the time of Sayyid Sālim's presence in Ja'alan, Shaikh Ṣaliḥ b. 'Alī al-Ḥarṭhi was supporting Sālim in his claims and urging the Hinawi faction in al-Sharqiyyah to attach themselves to assist him, using his religious influence upon them.⁶³ Sayyid Sālim had already been from in alliance with Sayyid Ibrahim against the Sultan's authority in February 1872 when the two had agreed to act in cooperation: Sayyid Ibrahim in the north, and Sayyid Sālim in the south.

At this time Shaikh Zaid b. Khalifah, who held the Buraimi oasis for the Sultan, was in Muscat to renew friendly relations and to mediate in the dispute between Sālim and the Sultan. Shaikh Zaid was unsuccessful in his offer of mediation in the dispute, which involved the Hinawi tribes of the region whose ambition was to rise against the Sultan.⁶⁴ The Sultan was looking for a positive settlement to his troubles. The British Resident, Colonel Pelly, who was a regular visitor to Muscat, was willing to help him overcome all his difficulties, as he believed in his ability to provide permanent peace and strength in the country. The Sultan remained very respectful to the Political Agent in Muscat and the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, who were both in close contact with him and had a strong relationship with him. This was the basis for the Sultan feeling he could act with a certain degree of self-assurance.

The trouble from Ibrahim's side arose again in the month of November 1872, when he managed to re-occupy al-Khaburah, when the Sultan's position was impaired by lack of funds. However, Ibrahim himself was in a very bad situation because of the shortage of money and British support to his opponent, and was too weak to extend his operation, or even to confirm his position in this town, in which he left a

small garrison. The town was attacked by the Sultan's troops and was retaken into his authority.⁶⁵

The importance of Muscat and Gulf affairs had forced some changes in British conduct due to the growth of the British interests in the region. On 30th December 1872, the Government of Bombay submitted a proposal to transfer political relations with the Persian Gulf from the Government of Bombay to the Government of India, and these was done. In fact the affairs of Muscat remained under the orders of the Political Residency in the Gulf, but in case of emergency where delay would affect the public interest, the Muscat Agency could forward correspondence directly to India. Under these circumstances the Resident should have a copy of the same document which had been sent to India, and the Agent was obliged to explain to him why he had done so.⁶⁶ On the same day, Captain Samuel B. Miles replaced Major Ross in the position as Muscat Agent.⁶⁷ Accordingly from now on the Muscat Agency became the second most important British official position in the Gulf after the Residency at Bushire. Captain (later Lt. Col.) Miles held the post of Agent longer than any other representative, and was very effective in his post.⁶⁸

However, some improvement for the Sultan's position was developing in Oman before the arrival of Captain Miles at Muscat: Sayyid Sālim had found himself unable to rise against the Sultan's authority after his unsuccessful attack on Qurayyat and Sur in September 1872. He proceeded to Bombay before the close of the year.⁶⁹ On 4th February 1873 the Government of Bombay confirmed his arrival from Oman, and reported that his intention was to stay there for only a short time and that the reason for his visit was not clear. Sayyid Sālim's brother Sayyid Ḥāreb remained in Bediyyah in Oman for some time, and then returned to Qishm.⁷⁰

By now Sultan Turki had started his operations against Sayyid Ibrahim. In early February 1873 he moved against Barka, al-Khaburah, and Sohar. This

campaign ran on for approximately four months, and the Sultan managed by July of the same year to recover his possessions on the coast.⁷¹ At this stage he had been strengthened by the renewal of the Zanzibar subsidy, and the assistance of the Bani al-Na'im tribe, who persuaded him to attack Sohar; this proved to be a successful campaign. On this occasion Sayyid Ibrahim surrendered al-Rustaq a short time after he had regained it.⁷² Negotiations between the Sultan and Ibrahim b. Qais were entered into, which resulted in the surrender of Sohar and the other towns on the Batinah coast. In this settlement Sayyid Ibrahim received a sum of \$MT 5,000 and a monthly pension of \$MT 100 on condition not to move out of the Ḥabbi fort in Sohar.⁷³ That was the most successful achievement for the Sultan in that year. So the Sultan was now more settled, at least for the time being, and his troubles had abated; Sayyid Sālim was in India, Shaikh Ṣaliḥ b. 'Alī had not yet started his activity against the Sultan, and Sayyid Ibrahim had become the Sultan's pensioner.

4.5. The Sultan's trouble in Gwader with 'Abd al-'Aziz and Sālim

Sayyid Ibrahim's cooperative attitude and the Sultan's successes were short-lived. On June 1st 1873 the news reached Muscat that Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz b. Sa'id, the Sultan's brother, and Sayyid Sālim had left Bombay separately on *Baghlahs* for Mekran in the Persian Gulf.⁷⁴ In fact at the close of July 1873 Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz almost succeeded in capturing Gwader.⁷⁵ The Sultan tried to placate them by offering an allowance of \$MT 300 a month on condition that they refrain from interfering in Omani affairs; unfortunately the suggestion was declined by both of them, and Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz strengthened his operation against Gwader instead. He attacked it unsuccessfully, but a considerable amount of damage was caused to the property of a number of the British subjects there.⁷⁶ Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz, though, had managed to gather support from some of the Baluchi tribes in the district, and collected a force of about 500 men. A month later he had been deserted by most of his men, but he remained for some time on the Mekran Coast preparing himself for an attempt to cross

over to Muscat.⁷⁷ At the same time Sayyid Ibrahim had revived his animosity towards Sultan Turki, because he was enjoying a remarkable upsurge of support among some of the Omani tribes to recover the Batinah coast main towns. In fact the return of the tribes' support for his claims would not be freely available, because the British authorities in the Gulf and the Government of India were keen to support the Sultan, as he was becoming a closer ally to them than any one else in the region. The Sultan was now very important as an extremely sensitive factor to British interests in Oman and the Persian Gulf, so the British representatives in the Gulf were authorised to take any suitable action to prevent real hostilities arising against the Sultan's interests.

In the Sultan's communications with the British authorities in the region, he confirmed that Sayyid Sālim had no influence or prestige in Oman after his departure, and undoubtedly he had difficulties in crossing over to Oman. However, the Sultan was extremely anxious about his younger brother's activities, since he was more powerful and dangerous than Sālim, and he might cross into the country at any time. The British Resident, Lt. Colonel Ross, and the Political Agent in Muscat, Captain Miles, agreed with the Sultan's views.⁷⁸ At this point the British Political Agent at Muscat came to the conclusion that such a settlement by the Sultan could not be accomplished without effective influence on the part of the British. Sayyid Sālim and Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz remained on the Persian Coast moving from one place to another. Finally the Government of India instructed the Commissioner in Sind, on 14th August 1873, that if these two men were to continue disturbing and violating Gwader with military attacks, and did not accept the Sultan's offer of a pension, he was at liberty to imprison them.⁷⁹ The Government of Bombay were on an alert following news of the two men on the Persian Coast, and on 1st September 1873, they sent a telegram to Sir W. Merewether, the Commissioner in Sind replying to his request for instructions about their activities, as follows:

"Inform 'Abdul 'Aziz and Sayyid Salim of terms arranged with Toorkee, invite them to accept and come in within ten days, if now refused terms will not be renewed; if they forcibly threaten Gwader or attempt to cross to Oman or Persian Gulf arrest them if possible. Warn them distinctly of this".⁸⁰

However, this threat was not taken seriously by Sālim and 'Abd al-'Aziz, and they refused the orders as they saw little chance in forwarding their activities against Oman. 'Abd al-'Aziz started his activity against Oman shortly after receiving the above-mentioned threat, and his actions continued during the month of September 1873, in the hope of getting effective help from inside the country; but his campaign ended in failure. On 16th September 1873 the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, Lt. Colonel Ross, confirmed to the Government of India that Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz, accompanied by eleven armed men, had been captured at sea near Sur by the Political Agent on board the *Rifleman*.⁸¹ Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz was then imprisoned in Karachi, under the guard of the British Government. He was promised a payment of \$MT 300 through the British Government, on condition he stayed there and refrained from interference in the affairs of Oman and did not leave Karachi without permission.⁸² He was set at liberty and the allowance was paid to him.

Gwader was again under attack, but this time by Sayyid Sālim b. Thuwaini, who surprised and captured the town fort with about 17 supporters.⁸³ He occupied the place for about four days, when the Sultan's Wali and his troops managed to recover their position in Gwader while Sālim was suffering from a shortage of money and a lack of forces. He escaped towards Sahu in the Persian lands, on the Mekran coast. He stayed there for only few a days before going back to Qishm, where his brother Hāreb had returned to from Oman some time ago.⁸⁴

His dispute with the Sultan had lasted for some months, and a settlement was required by Sultan Turki to resolve the situation with him. The Sultan felt that his own efforts must be concentrated on his problems inside the country, and therefore it

was an urgent matter to resolve the matter with Sayyid Sālim and Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz. By the end of the year 1873, Sayyid Sālim had been informed through the Assistant Political Agent at Gwader that the Sultan intended to offer him the same allowance that was being paid to Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz, \$MT 300, as soon as he gave up his activities against Oman. Sayyid Sālim refused the offer, which he saw as the frustration of his hope to regain the throne of Oman. Sayyid Sālim made his next attempt on the first day of 1874, crossing over to Oman, heading for either Sur or Dubai on the Trucial Coast. He opted for Sur, because of the invitation which he had received from the tribes of Ja'alan who had persuaded him to return to the country.⁸⁵ Consequently, the refusal of Sayyid Sālim of the Sultan's offer led to his capture by H.M.S. *Daphne* during his crossing to Sur, and he was sent as a prisoner to Hyderabad, where he was held until his death in December 1876.⁸⁶

4.6. The continuation of the Sultan's troubles in 1874

4.6.1. *Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali's attack on Muscat*

At this time the situation in Oman itself was no longer peaceful. Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali al-Ḥarthi, the former ally of Sayyid Sālim, had prepared to mount an operation to attack Muscat, which took place in August 1873. The attempt was prevented by the Nadabiyyin and the Raḥbi tribes, who were a Ghafiri faction, near the wadi of al-Aqq in favour of Sultan Sayyid Turki.⁸⁷ Ṣaliḥ's b. 'Ali operation was hindered for only few months, and it resumed on the rumour of the Sultan's death which had been spread throughout the country in January 1874. Shaikh Ṣaliḥ took advantage of this opportunity, and proceeded towards Muscat leading a small force, of about 300 men, determined to occupy Muscat by means of a surprise night attack.⁸⁸ As this operation took place a long way from the sea, the British authorities in the Agency could do nothing about this move, which reached Ruwi just a few kilometres from Matrah and Muscat. Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali's troops were a combination of al-Sharqiyyah Hinawi

tribesmen, mainly al-Ḥirṭh, al-Ḥabūs, al-Ḥajreyyin, and al-Wahibah, with some of the Bani Rawaha, who were also a Hinawi faction. He also brought with him Ḥamad b. 'Azzan, the 12-year-old son of the late Imām (Sayyid 'Azzan b. Qais), to establish him as ruler of Oman if the move were successful.⁸⁹

When the news of this raid reached Muscat, the Sultan marshalled his troops, who were chiefly Wahhabi mercenaries and Baluchis. The Sultan's troops suffered a serious defeat at the hands of the attackers on 17th January 1874; Ṣaliḥ's force took possession of Matrah quickly, once British support for the Sultan disappeared.⁹⁰ The town market was plundered indiscriminately, with a large part of the damage was inflicted on the British Indian subjects. The Sultan could not fight back for the time being, and preferred to enter into negotiations with them. Some of the attackers' leaders, such as Ḥamud b. Sa'id al-Jahhafi and others, also preferred a peaceful solution to the dispute. The Sultan soon agreed to negotiate the differences with them through his wali of Sohar, Badr b. Saif Al Bū Sa'idi.⁹¹ Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali agreed reluctantly to Badr's suggestion, which succeeded in bringing the rebels to a settlement, and agreed to send 70 of their men with Badr headed by Hilal b. Sa'id al-Ḥajri and Ḥamud b. Sa'id al-Jahhafi of the al-Wahibah tribe, to meet with Sultan Turki in Muscat.⁹²

In fact the rest of the rebels, whom they left with Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali in Matrah, were preparing for the next attack on Muscat, but this attempt ended with the appearance of Ḥamud al-Jahhafi and a new settlement whereby he received \$MT 600 and 100 bags of rice, on condition that he left Muscat and Matrah instantly.⁹³ Sultan Turki was expecting direct British support against the rebels, which was guaranteed to him in the event of Muscat being subject to any attack. H. M. S. *Nimble* eventually arrived in Muscat on January 22nd 1874, two days after the retreat of the rebels.⁹⁴ The two parties both took the agreement as a temporary solution at this stage, and the acceptance of its provisions appeared to be the origin of their future struggle. They

considered it as a step towards the next conflict, especially Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali, whose objection to the Sultan's authority remained clear and public. On all occasions, Shaikh Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali considered the Sultan's rule as unsuitable for the country as he had not been elected as Imām and he felt the religious community should be in power.

The Foreign Secretary for the Government of India, Sir. C. U. Aitchison, who had previously been one of the defenders of the policy of non-intervention in Omani internal affairs, had altered his attitude after British subjects suffered in Oman. He urged the Government of India to assist the Sultan with naval forces on stand-by in the Persian Gulf.⁹⁵ The attitude of the British authorities in India towards the dispute in Oman had gradually moved to a position of supporting a resolution of the crisis which served the Sultan. Shaikh Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali in his recent attack on Muscat had found himself bound to accept the Jahhafi agreement with the Sultan, and to retreat on the arrival of H.M.S. *Nimble* at Muscat. So he found himself in a weak position and the British were ready to support the Sultan, (who had hoped for this support from the beginning of the crisis). Unwillingly Shaikh Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali retired to al-Sharqiyyah. He then started planning a new campaign in cooperation with Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais, who had already moved against the Sultan's wishes. Shaikh Ṣaliḥ persuaded Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais to break off his understanding with the Sultan, who was now paying him monthly.

4.6.2. *Ibrahim's attack on al-Masna'ah and the 'Yal Sa'd involvement*

On 18th September 1873, Major Miles reported that Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais had managed to reach an arrangement with Sayyid Faisal b. Ḥamud of al-Rustaq to hand over the town on receiving the sum of 2,200 Crowns, and a certain date for this settlement had been given.⁹⁶ In fact at the time of Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali's departure from Muscat, Ibrahim acknowledged the success which had been achieved by him in Muscat. On 7th March the 1874, the encouragement of Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali had convinced

Ibrahim, and he attached himself to some tribal Shaikhs on the Batinah coast.⁹⁷ He was joined chiefly by of the Hinawi section of 'Yal Sa'd , with whom he attacked al-Masan'ah and took control of the fort after plundering a large amount of property belonging to the British subjects in the town.⁹⁸ The British Agent at Muscat realised that since his return from Sohar, the Sultan seemed to be unable to face all his conflicts alone, so proper support should be given to him to ensure their cooperation in times of danger.

So when Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais had taken possession of al-Masna'ah, Major Miles sent a telegram on 7th March 1874, to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, Colonel Ross, in which he informed him that he would make it clear to Ibrahim b. Qais that he would be considered as acting in a hostile way against the British authorities if he refused to withdraw his force from there.⁹⁹ However, the British Political Resident was not in absolute accord with the Agent's proposed communication with Ibrahim, as it would be considered improper to aid directly the Sultan in his recent troubles, or even his activities on the Batinah coast. Despite the Resident's disapproval, the Governor-General in Council replied to the Agent's telegram on this question with agreement, saying that Sultan Turki was a British ally, that they should watch any proceedings by Sayyid Ibrahim, and that Ibrahim would be responsible for any damage which affected British subjects on the coast.¹⁰⁰

On 13th March, Major Miles proceeded towards al-Masna'ah on board the *Philomel* accompanied by an officer of the Sultan. He was able to regain valuables to the extent of 11,000 Rupees which were removed quickly from the fort to H.M.S. *Philomel*, and Sayyid Ibrahim was forced to pay for the rest of the damage done by his forces. The Agent also instructed him to surrender the fort to the Sultan. Sayyid Ibrahim initially refused all these requests, but he was warned that if the rebels did not evacuate the place, they would be compelled to do so by force. Consequently, when the warning reached them, they were shelled until they left the fort, and Ibrahim

subsequently agreed to pay the cost of the damage. The Government of India wholeheartedly approved of the Agent's action in al-Masna'ah.¹⁰¹

Sayyid Ibrahim's main supporter in the action was Shaikh Muhammed b. Sulayyim al-Ghārbi, a former adherent of Sayyid 'Azzan b. Qais, who now had a religious following on the Batinah coast. The other effective supporters were the 'Yal Sa'd, the largest tribe in the area at that time.¹⁰²

The British authorities in Muscat and the Persian Gulf were instructed to take effective action against the hostilities on the Batinah coast. The Resident was instructed to proceed to Muscat as a result of these troubles. On 26th March, Lt. Colonel Ross and the Agent, Major Miles, headed again towards al-Masna'ah, on board H.M.S. *Hugh Ross*, leaving two of the Royal Navy ships, the *Rifleman* and the *Philomel*, anchored off the Muscat coast.¹⁰³ They undoubtedly wanted to build on the action which had been taken by the Agent previously, as well as to show that they would not desert the Sultan in times of trouble, and to indicate to his opponents that when the situation became urgent, their support would quickly be within his reach.

Sayyid Ibrahim was asked again by the British, on behalf of the Sultan, to withdraw his force from al-Masna'ah and to pay the cost of the damages, but he refused for a second time. On this occasion Sultan Turki's wish was to demonstrate his strength against al-Masna'ah.¹⁰⁴ In accordance with this request, H.M.S. *Rifleman*, *Philomel*, and *Hugh Ross* were instructed to bombard and destroy the fort. Compensation of \$MT 15,000 (considered as the loss to the British subjects, was imposed on Sayyid Ibrahim and his allied tribe of 'Yal Sa'd, by the British Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, Colonel Ross, who then left the issue under the Agent's consideration.¹⁰⁵

The Sultan revealed his pleasure at the British action against al-Masna'ah in his meeting with the British Resident at Muscat on 29th March 1874, and confirmed that in order to bring about peace in the country, he had accepted the offer made by the religious leader in al-Batinah, Shaikh al-Ghārbi, to mediate in the trouble between the Sultan and Sayyid Ibrahim.¹⁰⁶ In fact this effort ended unsuccessfully, when the Sultan entered into negotiations for a settlement in April 1874, and returned to Muscat on the 18th of the same month to discuss the question with Major Miles. On May 16th Major Miles had reported the issue to the Resident and informed him of Ibrahim's departure to al-Rustaq, probably to escape the promised payment for the damage.¹⁰⁷

Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais then communicated with the Political Agent from al-Rustaq. He wrote to Major Miles saying that he had received the Agent's letter on that request, and had already sent his delegation to the Batinah coast where the injury took place to discuss the problem; this had delayed the payment by the people of the district. Sayyid Ibrahim said that he would inform the Agent soon about their discussion regarding compensation.¹⁰⁸ Sayyid Ibrahim also requested the Political Agent to use his influence upon these people if they refused to pay this compensation, and even persuade them to pay it in annual instalments as they were very poor and might be unable to pay the whole amount immediately. He asked the Agent to contact them directly, trying to find a quick solution to this question, and supporting him with any information that could be obtained for such a settlement, while he would remain at peace with the Sultan.¹⁰⁹ Communications continued between the British Agent and Sayyid Ibrahim relative to that matter, and to the Sultan's position on the Batinah coast.

On 30th May 1874, the paramount Sheikh of the 'Yal Sa'd tribe contacted the Political Agent at Muscat about the troubles in al-Masna'ah, and the fine imposed upon them. They clarified their position towards Sayyid Ibrahim, and towards the Sultan. All the Sheikhs of 'Yal Sa'd confirmed to Major Miles that the tribe and all its

Shaikhs would never act against the wishes of the British officials in Oman or India.¹¹⁰ However, they would never willingly give Sayyid Ibrahim any trouble or be in dispute with him or his government on any issue, and they should be loyal to his authority. They had presented themselves as Ibrahim's subjects, and it was their duty to respect him loyally, and the payment of the compensation should be discussed with Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais who should be responsible for the payment of this indemnity.¹¹¹ The political Agent Major Miles kept in touch with the 'Yal Sa'd Shaikhs for the purpose of reconciling that difficulty.

On 6th June, 1874, Shaikh Ḥamad b. Aḥmad, the paramount Shaikh of 'Yal Sa'd, and the rest of the tribal Shaikhs addressed a letter to the Political Agent, in which they stated that the entire tribe were now in a very difficult financial situation, and complained that Sayyid Turki was behaving cruelly towards them through his officers. They requested the Agent mediate between them and the Sultan on this matter, as he had always done during the course of troubles between the Sultan and his subjects throughout the country.¹¹² Shaikh Ḥamad confirmed that he and all the people of his tribe would be very pleased to have the British Government representative's suggestions on the matter, which would never be disregarded, and any of his orders would be received respectfully and firm relations between them and the British Government could be established.¹¹³

In Major Miles's reply to the tribe of 'Yal Sa'd, he showed his satisfaction in finding that they were in agreement with his request for payment of the cost of the damages in al-Masna'ah. He clarified to them that obedience to that order would certainly have reduced the necessity for the use of force against them and would have ended the resentment of the British authorities at their behaviour in that province.¹¹⁴ In fact the British Agent was now in a position to represent the Sultan's wishes, and to complete a settlement on the issue, and he considered himself as the power which could emphasise the Sultan's position in the district in the hope of bringing peace and

settlement. Miles was unable to reassure the Shaikh about the situation on the al-Batinah coast, or to promise that the British would not be involved in the issue in the future, but was able to inform the Shaikh that it was absolutely necessary that rebellious activities should cease forthwith and the tribe's forces must be withdrawn from a point close to al-Masna'ah within a certain time.¹¹⁵

On the following day the Shaikh wrote to the Political Agent confirming his compliance with the British request, and saying that the friendly relationships between them should continue, even though the trouble which had been caused was significant. He also indicated to the Agent his true desire, and that of his tribe, to improve relations with Sultan Turki, as soon as the Sultan prevented his wali from oppressing, killing and plundering the people of the town.¹¹⁶ All these allegations, which had been presented against the Sultan and his wali, were unproven, and the Agent could only accept them as an excuse for 'Yal Sa'd's activities and their revolt against the Sultan's power. The tribe had been known as one of those which had co-operated with Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais and Shaikh Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali in their moves against the Muscat Government on several occasions, and they had prevented the Sultan from exercising his influence over the area in which they resided. So when they were involved in this trouble, they requested the British authorities to mediate between them and the Sultan in the hope of forgiveness for their earlier behaviour. They also persuaded the Agent to encourage the Sultan to change his wali to someone who would be better inclined towards the people and the country. Consequently, they would conduct themselves peacefully to the Sultan and his people since it was their wish to obey and serve his wishes faithfully, and they were willing to see him on the throne of the country rather than anyone else.¹¹⁷ They went much further when they stated that they would obey no other ruler than him, as they were hereditary subjects of the Al Bū Sa'id Dynasty and their change of allegiance had occurred only on account of harshness and brutality. They accused the Sultan's wali of tyranny when he sailed off from the fort

on 5th June 1874 and burnt the houses of the poor and plundered what remained of their property, and accused him of not having been able to do so before the arrival of British support. They accused the British of being obliged to come to the support of the Sultan in that operation.¹¹⁸ They acknowledged the Sultan's kindness, but they wished to see him preventing the brutal actions of his officers. In fact the trouble between the Sultan and the tribe of 'Yal Sa'd on the Batinah coast continued for some time afterwards.

4.6.3. *The attack on al-Suwaiq by the 'Yal Sa'd*

On 6th June, 1874, the British Political Agent at Muscat, Major Miles, sent a telegram to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, Lt. Colonel Ross, informing him of a new attack against al-Suwaiq by the 'Yal Sa'd tribe, in which they captured the town and plundered the property of the resident. He also informed Colonel Ross of the Sultan's request for immediate British support and the use of the British Agent's influence upon the attackers to withdraw from the fort.¹¹⁹

Because of this attack and the Sultan's request the British Agent proceeded towards al-Suwaiq on board H.M.S. *Magpie* accompanied by one of the Sultan's officers. When this expedition arrived they found the situation desperate.¹²⁰ The British Government in India approved the Agent's action on this account, and considered it as suitable treatment, which gave the Sultan a new importance in the eyes of the British authorities, and the impression that responded to any request from him would be at any crucial time. The British Resident in the Persian Gulf, Lt. Colonel Ross, was himself directed by the Government of India to continue with the same support that was provided by the Political Agent to the Sultan.¹²¹ The warning was at once issued by the Agent to Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais and his supporters among the 'Yal Sa'd Shaikhs, regarding their responsibility for the plunder of the town. The Government of India were in absolute accord with the British Resident and the Agent

at Muscat regarding policy. They confirmed their Representatives' actions in a telegram to the Resident in which they stated the following:

"As you are convinced that strong measures are needed, they may be carried out to the extent of enforcing any terms that you judge reasonable and necessary. Viceroy would be glad if fair indemnity could be arranged without resort to extreme reprisals".¹²²

Regarding Sayyid Ibrahim's suggestion of the payment of the cost of the damage by his supporters among the 'Yal Sa'd by yearly instalments, the tribe of 'Yal Sa'd rejected the allegations against them and the Resident did not accept either Sayyid Ibrahim's excuse, or the 'Yal Sa'd's refusal.

In conjunction with the Agent, the Resident was now in a position to adopt any suitable action against Sayyid Ibrahim and his allies to force them to fulfil their responsibilities. On July 10th 1874, Ross and Major Miles, together with the senior Naval Officer for H.M.S. *Philomel* and *Magpie* at Muscat headed towards the Batinah coast with *May Frere* and a number of the Sultan's forces under the command of his brother Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz who at that stage was on good terms with the Sultan.¹²³ The intention was to carry out their threat against Ibrahim b. Qais and his adherents among the 'Yal Sa'd. The operation was completely successful, and by the end of July 1874 an agreement was reached for the payment of the indemnity within three months. The tribe submitted to the Sultan, the Batinah coast actions were stopped, and al-Masna'ah and al-Suwaiq were regained by the Sultan's troops with British support.¹²⁴ In reality this agreement was not able to bring about the tribe's allegiance to Sultan Turki's authority, and the trouble on the Batinah coast ebbed and flowed. The indemnity had not been fully received on the exact date, but it was completed in January 1875. Afterwards Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais agreed to retreat in exchange for the restoration of his allowance of \$MT 100 per month and went to al-Rustaq, which was his primary base.¹²⁵

4.7. The Sultan extends his authority

The Sultan's authority along the Coast was extended further north and his influence upon Sohar firmly asserted, though some parts of the country went their own way under various, troublesome leaders.¹²⁶ Oman's trade appeared to experience slight difficulties and suffered from some loss of profit during the year 1875, as it was affected by the internal troubles. Generally, Muscat had been declining steadily as a commercial centre in the region for some years past.¹²⁷

The Sultan's reputation grew throughout the region and relations with his neighbouring Shaikhs on the coast improved steadily. Dubai was his first strong ally during his early days in power during 1871. The British support and approval, which had been used by their Resident in the Persian Gulf, Lt. Colonel Pelly, to divide Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais and Shaikh Zaid b. Khalifah of Abū Dhabi, served the Sultan's ends when he managed to convert the enmity into peace, concluding an alliance a year later.¹²⁸ This step led to a further extension of the Sultan's ability and confirmed his dominance in the area, which persuaded more shaikhs in the region to submit their allegiance to his authority.

On 14th May 1874, the Sultan's Wali in Sohar, his son Sayyid Muhammed bin Turki wrote to him from Sohar about the peaceful situation there, and supplied him with the news he had recently received from the ruler of al-Fujairah on the Trucial Coast. This was that he was anxious to place himself under the Sultan's protection against Sālim bin Sultan of al-Sharjah.¹²⁹ Shaikh Ḥamad b. 'Abdullah b. Saif al-Sharqi, the ruler of al-Fujairah, gave notice of his intention to give up his authority over his fort, and asked the Sultan to send his soldiers and governor to take possession of the region. He was to be considered a subordinate of the Sultan and under the protection of his government, which the British Government considered more able to contend with than Sālim b. Sultan.¹³⁰

During the mid 1880s the authority in Muscat became interested in extending its territory over some ports on the Omani coast, in particular Khor Fakkan, Daba and Kalba. Further to the Sultan's desire to have other points of influence on the coast, the people of the provinces were themselves interested in coming under the Sultan's protection. Nevertheless, when attempts were made by the Sultan or his representative in Sohar to achieve this goal, the British authorities always objected strongly to any further enlargement of the Sultan's territory on the Omani coast, or to his having a real influence upon any ports on that sea.

In fact the Sultan had been attracted to extending his possessions there by the chiefs of the ports themselves. In June 1886, Shaikh Hamad bin Nasir, the Governor of Sohar for Sultan Sayyid Turki, wrote to him saying that the people of Khor Fakkan, Daba and Kalba wished to be under the Sultan's influence and protection.¹³¹ In relation to this issue the Sultan requested the Political Agent at Muscat, Lieutenant Colonel E. Mockler, to obtain the advice of the British Resident in the Persian Gulf on the annexation of those ports. The British Resident and the Consul to Fars, Lt. Col. Miles, replied to the Sultan's request through his Agent, as follows:

"Any aggressive enterprise of the kind on the part of His Highness Sayyid Turki against his neighbours the Qawasim, with whom he is now at peace, would be, in my opinion, highly inadvisable, and would probably, if undertaken, terminate in result very injurious to His Highness".¹³²

The British Government in India approved the Resident's action on this question, and the Under-Secretary to the Government of India, Sir. W. J. Cunningham, confirmed to him in a subsequent communication that:

"I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter and enclosure No. 79 dated the 7th July, 1886, regarding a proposal made to the Sultan of Muscat by the Wali of Sohar to annex three ports on the Oman Coast. In reply I am to state your action in the matter is approved by the Government of India".¹³³

The Sultan undoubtedly accepted this suggestion, and he directed his Wali in Sohar to refrain from any action he might intend or any interference in the ports' domestic affairs. It was very difficult for the Sultan to diverge from his British ally or to act against their wishes, since he would still need their assistance on many issues in the future. In his reply to the Political Agent in Muscat the Sultan confirmed that the Resident's judgement on the matter had been considered respectfully as promoting the purpose of peace in the region and in the Sultan's dominions, and the order had been issued to the Wali of Sohar to refrain from interference in these affairs.¹³⁴

¹ *Administration Report of the Persian Gulf Political Residency and Muscat Political Agent for the year 1881-82*, vol. ii, p. 14.

² Landen, R. G., *Oman since 1856: Disruptive Modernisation in a Traditional Arab Society*. New Jersey; 1967, p. 322. See also Ward, P., *Travel in Oman*, Cambridge; 1987, p. 45.

³ Ward, P., *Travel in Oman*, Cambridge; 1987, p. 45.

⁴ Ibid. p. 54.

⁵ Ibid. p. 45.

⁶ Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 520; Kelly, 1968, p. 745.

⁷ R. O. vol. ii, *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1869-1872*, p. 208.

⁸ Peterson, J. E., *Oman in the Twentieth Century*. London; 1978, p. 28; Curzon, G. N., *Persia and the Persian Question*, London; 1892, p. 438.

⁹ Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 520; Kelly, 1968, p. 745.

¹⁰ Coupland, R., *Africa and its Invaders from the Earliest Times to the Death of Sayyid Said 1856*, Oxford; 1938, p. 100.

¹¹ Bennett, N. R., *A History of the Arab State of Zanzibar*. London; 1978, pp. 101-103.

¹² Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 520

¹³ Aitchison, C. U., *A Collection of Treaties and Engagements and Sanads Relating to India and Neighbouring Countries*, New Delhi, 1983, vol. xi, pp. 276-77; Landen, 1967, p. 228.

¹⁴ Aitchison, 1983, vol. xi, p. 277.

¹⁵ Ibid. p. 277.

¹⁶ Kelly, 1968, p. 745.

¹⁷ Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, pp. 492-93; al-Salimi, 1978, vol. ii, p. 231; Allen, C. H., *Oman: the Modernisation of the Sultanate of Oman*, London; 1987, pp. 55-56.

¹⁸ Qishm is an island in the Persian Gulf, occupied in 1719 by the Arabs of Oman, who were expelled by Nasir Shah in 1737. Some time after his death in 1747, Qishm was under the influence of the Bani-al-Na'im of Oman who held it along with Bandar Abbas from Karim Khan Zand (reign 1775-79). In 1793-94 the island together with Bandar Abbas and Hurmuz fell under the sovereignty of the Al Bū Sa'id dynasty during the time of Sayyid Sultan b. Ahmed. At the time from 1804-05, the Al Bū Sa'id influence on the island was evicted by the alliance of the Bani al-Na'im and the Qawasim. By the end of 1809 the Omani influence on Qishm was restored

again to the authority of Muscat during the reign of Sayyid Sa'id b. Sultan (1806-56). In July 1820, after the British Agreement with the Arab chiefs of the Trucial Coast against piracy in the Gulf, Qishm was appointed as a British military base till January 1823, to watch the Arab activities in the Gulf. The island was declared to be Persian territory, and was considered as a dominion of Bandar Abbas which had been under Omani influence as a result of the lease signed during the reign of Sayyid Sa'id b. Sultan. In April 1856, the lease was renewed by the Government of Oman, but was terminated in 1866-7 during the reign of Sayyid Thuwaini b. Sa'id. A new lease of eight years was achieved by Sālim b. Thuwaini in August 1868. On 13th March 1871, Sultan Turki applied for Lt. Col. Pelly's assistance in making an arrangement for a new lease of the Bandar Abbas District, and Pelly requested the Government of India's instruction on this question, who in reply never granted the Sultan that lease again. See L/P&S/5/594. *Letter from the Secretary to the Govt. of India to Foreign Office London*. Dated, 12th April, 1872. See Kelly, J. B., "Kishm" *E. of Islam*, vol. v, (1986), pp. 183-84; R. O. vol. i, *Precis of Muscat Affairs, 1869-72*, pp. 499-502; Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 493. I.O.R. R/15/6/ *Letter from the Government of India to the Political Agent at Zanzibar*. Dated Bombay, 9 April 1868.

¹⁹ R. O. vol. i, *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1869-72*, p. 54.

²⁰ Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 493.

²¹ R. O. vol. i. *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1869-72*, p. 479; Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 493.

²² al-Salimi, 1978, vol. ii, pp. 231-232.

²³ Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 493.

²⁴ R. O. vol. i, *"Precis of Muscat Affairs 1869-72"*, p. 479.

²⁵ R. O. *ibid.* p. 479.

²⁶ I. O. R. R/15/6/5. *Letter from H. H. Sultan Turki to the PRPG Lt. Col.* Dated Muscat, September 1871.

²⁷ I. O. R. R/15/6/5. *Telegram from the PRPG to the Secretary to the Government*. Dated Bushire, 15th September 1871.

²⁸ I. O. R. R/15/6/5. *Telegram from the Secretary to the Government to the PRPG Lt. Col. Pelly*. Dated 22nd September 1871.

²⁹ R. O. vol. i, *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1869-72*, pp. 481-83.

³⁰ After the conclusion of the truce between the Sultan and Sayyid Ibrahim the problem was continued. Ibrahim had proceeded from Sohar to al-Hazm for the discussion of the settlement. This action was considered by the Sultan as a step towards a strategical unification between him and Sayyid Faisal b. Hamud, the chief of al-Rustaq. The Sultan moved against al-Hazm, and failed, and he returned to Muscat. At this stage Sālim was still in Qishm where he was visited by his brother Sayyid Hareb b. Thuwaini. See the R. O. vol. i, *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1869-72*, pp. 481-83.

³¹ R. O. vol. i. *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1869-72*, p. 483.

³² I. O. R. R/15/6/5. *Letter from the Political Agent in Muscat to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf Lt. Col. Pelly*. Dated Muscat, 5th January 1872.

³³ I. O. R. R/15/6/5. *Letter from the Political Agent at Muscat to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf Lt. Col. Pelly*. Dated Muscat, 5th January 1872.

³⁴ I. O. R. R/15/6/5. *Telegram from the Political Agent at Muscat to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf*. Dated Muscat, 21st February 1872.

³⁵ I. O. R. R/15/6/5. *Telegram from the Political Agent in Muscat to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf*. Dated Muscat, 24th February 1872.

³⁶ R. O. vol. i, *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1869-72*, p. 483.

³⁷ In accordance with this issue, an Agreement was entered later on between the Government of Oman and the British authorities relative to the jurisdiction of the Political Agent and Consul over the subjects of the native States of India residing in Oman's dominions, 1873.

In this Agreement Sultan Turki stated that his wish was that, "all subjects of Native States in India residing in Muscat territories should be amenable to the jurisdiction of the Political Agent and Consul at Muscat, and it would appear that such jurisdiction is at present defective without the express consent of H. H. the Sultan: it is hereby formally declared and consented to by H. H. Sayyid Turki b. Said on behalf of himself, his heirs and successors, that Subjects of Native States of India who may commit offences within Muscat territories shall be amenable to the Political Agent and Consul's Court in the same way as British subjects whenever, in any particular case, the Political Agent thinks fit to exercise such jurisdiction, and that the words "British subjects" in all Treaties between the English Government and the Muscat State shall include subjects of Native India States". See *R. O. 1867-1947*, vol. vi, Archive edition; 1988. p. 402. Also R. O. vol. i. *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1869-72*, p. 483.

³⁸ I. O. R. R/15/6/5. *Official News Reports from 18th July 1872 to 3rd March, 1872. No. 5 of 1872. Muscat Political Agency*. Dated Muscat, 3rd March 1872.

³⁹ I. O. R. R/15/6/5. See the same News Reports

⁴⁰ I. O. R. R/15/6/5. *Telegram from the Political Agent at Muscat, Major E. Ross, to the PRPG, Lt. Col. Pelly*. Dated Muscat, 28th February 1872.

⁴¹ I. O. R. R/15/6/5. *Telegram from the Political Agent at Muscat Major E. Ross, to the PRPG, Lt. Col. Pelly*. Dated Muscat, 29th February 1872.

⁴² R. O. vol. i. *Precis of Muscat affairs 1869-72*, p. 483.

⁴³ I. O. R. R/15/6/5. *Letter from the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf Lt. Col. Lewis Pelly to the Secy. to the Government of India.* Dated Bushire, 15th March 1872.

⁴⁴ R. O. vol. i. *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1869-72*, p. 485.

⁴⁵ Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 494.

⁴⁶ I. O. R. R/15/6/5. *Official News Report from 4th to 18th February, 1872. No. 4 of 1872. Muscat Political Agency.* Dated 18th February 1872.

⁴⁷ I. O. R. R/15/6/5. *Letter from His Highness Sultan Turki b. Said to the Political Agent at Muscat.* Dated Muscat, 7 Safar, 1289 (April, 1872).

⁴⁸ I. O. R. R/15/6/5. *Official News Reports from 4th to 18th February, 1872. No. 4 of 1872. Muscat Political Agency.* Dated Muscat, 18th February, 1872.

⁴⁹ I. O. R. R/15/6/5. See the same News Reports.

⁵⁰ I. O. R. R/15/6/5. *Letter from Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais to the Political Agent at Muscat Major Ross.* 21st Safar, 1289 (30th April, 1872).

⁵¹ R. O. vol. ii, *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1872-1892*, p. 20.

⁵² R. O. vol. ii, *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1872-92*, p. 20.

⁵³ R. O. *ibid.* p. 20.

⁵⁴ Aitchison, 1983, vol. xi, p. 275.

⁵⁵ R. O. vol. ii, *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1872-92*, p. 20.

⁵⁶ I. O. R. Mss. Eur. F126/40. *Letter from the British Resident in the Persian Gulf, Lt. Col. Pelly, to the Secretary to the Government of India.* Dated Muscat, 6th May 1872.

⁵⁷ I. O. R. Mss. Eur. F126/40. *Letter from the Secretary to the Government of India, to Lt. Col. Lewis Pelly, PRPG* Dated 1st July 1872.

⁵⁸ R. O. vol. ii, *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1872-92*, p. 21.

⁵⁹ For further information see Landen, R. G., *Oman since 1856*, New Jersey, 1967, pp. 96-97.

⁶⁰ *Report of the Administration of the Persian Gulf Political Residency and Muscat, for the year 1875-76*, vol. i, p. 77. For more information to this issue for the following period, see the *Administration Reports*, vol. i, ii, and iii

⁶¹ I. O. R. R/15/6/5. *Telegram from the British PRPG Lt. Col. Lewis Pelly, to the Secretary to the Government of India.* Dated 10th June 1872.

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- ⁶² R. O. vol. ii, *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1872-92*, p. 35.
- ⁶³ I. O. R. R/15/6/5. *Muscat Agency Reports to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf*. No. 486 of 1872. Dated Muscat, 21st August 1872.
- ⁶⁴ R. O. vol. ii, *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1872-1892*, p. 27.
- ⁶⁵ Ibid. p. 28.
- ⁶⁶ Ibid. pp. 28-29.
- ⁶⁷ Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 2675.
- ⁶⁸ When he took this position, he shared Ross and Pelly's interest in the Persian Gulf and in Oman history and politics. He occupied this position for five periods as Muscat Political Agent commencing on 30th December 1872 and ending on 15th April 1887. Landen, 1968, p. 211. Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, pp. 2675-76.
- ⁶⁹ Aitchison, 1983, vol. xi, p. 275. Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 494.
- ⁷⁰ R. O. vol. ii, *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1872-92*, p. 29.
- ⁷¹ R. O. vol. ii, *ibid.* p. 29.
- ⁷² Landen, 1968, p. 328. See also Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 494.
- ⁷³ Aitchison, 1983, vol. xi, p. 276; R. O. vol. ii, *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1872-92*, pp. 29-40. Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 494.
- ⁷⁴ *Report of the Administration of the Persian Gulf Political Residency and Muscat Political Agency, for the year, 1873-79*. vol. i, p. 74.
- ⁷⁵ Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 495.
- ⁷⁶ Aitchison, 1983, vol. xi, p. 276.
- ⁷⁷ *Report of the Administration of the Persian Gulf... for the year 1873-79*. vol. i, p. 75.
- ⁷⁸ R. O. vol. ii. *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1872-92*, p. 43.
- ⁷⁹ Ibid. p. 47.
- ⁸⁰ Ibid. p. 49.
- ⁸¹ Aitchison, 1983, vol. xi, p. 276; Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 494; R. O. vol. ii, *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1872-92*, pp. 48-49.
- ⁸² The Sultan's offer of the payment of \$MT 300 was conditional upon residing in Indian territories. 'Abd al-'Aziz refused the terms offered by the Sultan, and refused to accept a new proposal of a payment of \$500 instead of \$300 as well. Under these circumstances Abdul Aziz was sent to Karachi under the supervision of

Sir W. Merewether, the Commissioner in Sind, with a prohibition from taking any action or planning to cross over to Oman. The Commissioner was also instructed by the British Government not to exceed his allowance of \$300, which was deducted from the Sultan's subsidy. See R. O. vol. ii, *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1872-92*, pp. 48-49. Aitchison, 1983, vol. xi, p. 276.

⁸³ *Report of the Administration of the Persian Gulf... for the year 1873-74*. vol. 1, p. 76; R. O. vol. ii, p. 53.

⁸⁴ R. O. vol. ii, *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1872-92*, p. 91.

⁸⁵ R. O. vol. ii, *ibid.* p. 91.

⁸⁶ Aitchison, 1983, vol. xi, p. 276.

⁸⁷ Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 495.

⁸⁸ *Report of the Administration of the Persian Gulf... for the year 1873-74*, p. 76.

⁸⁹ Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 495.

⁹⁰ al-Salimi. *Tuhfat al-A'yan...*, vol. ii, p. 233. Lorimer, *Gazetteer*. vol. ii, p. 495.

⁹¹ al-Salimi, 1978, vol. ii, pp. 233-34; *Report on the Administration of the Persian Gulf...for the year, 1873-74*. vol. i, p. 76; Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 495.

⁹² al-Salimi, 1978, vol. ii, p. 234.

⁹³ The Agreement between the Sultan and al-Jahhafi, contained the following:

(i) The confiscation and sales of property by Sayyid 'Azzan b. Qais, and now in the hands of al-Hirth and Bani Rawahah tribes, to be confirmed.

(ii) That all al-Khalili's property should be restored to his sons and families.

(iii) That the property of Ḥamad b. Sulaimān should be restored in like manner.

(iv) Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali, was to undertake that Ibrahim b. Qais would not oppose Sultan Turki in any way.

(v) That Sayyid Turki should not undertake hostile operations against Ibrahim b. Qais.

(vi) The followers of Sheikh Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali in the present affairs to be forgiven and not punished.

(vii) That Sayyid Turki would not listen to evil and unfounded reports against Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali.

In fact this agreement solved nothing concerning the hostilities and the dispute between the Sultan and his opponents, but only averted hostility for some time. See R. O. vol. ii, *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1872-92*, p. 62, *Report on the Administration of the Persian Gulf...for the year 1873-74*, p. 76; al-Salimi, 1978, vol. ii, p. 234; Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 495.

⁹⁴ Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 495.

⁹⁵ Kumar, R., *India and the Persian Gulf Region 1858-1907*, London; 1965, p. 67.

⁹⁶ R. O. vol. ii, *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1872-92*, p. 63.

⁹⁷ *Report of the Administration of the Persian Gulf...for the year 1873-74*, vol. i, p. 77; al-Salimi, 1978, vol. ii, p. 234.

⁹⁸ Aitchison, 1983, vol. xi, p. 276.

⁹⁹ R. O. vol. ii, *ibid.* p. 65.

¹⁰⁰ R. O. vol. ii, *ibid.* p. 65.

¹⁰¹ R. O. vol. ii, *ibid.* p. 65.

¹⁰² Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 496.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.* p. 496.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.* p. 496.

¹⁰⁵ *Report of the Administration of the Persian Gulf...for the year 1873-74*, vol. i, p. 77.

¹⁰⁶ R. O. vol. ii, *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1872-92*, p. 70

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.* p. 70.

¹⁰⁸ I. O. R. R/15/6/7. *Letter from Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais to the British Political Agent at Muscat.* Dated, 13 Rabee al-Akhir, 1291 (May 1874).

¹⁰⁹ I. O. R. R/15/6/7. See the same letter.

¹¹⁰ I. O. R. R/15/6/7. *Letter from the Shaikhs of 'Yal Sa'd, to Major Miles, Political Agent and Consul at Muscat.* Dated, 13th Rabee al-Akhir, 1291 (30th May 1874).

¹¹¹ I. O. R. R/15/6/7. See the same letter.

¹¹² I. O. R. R/15/6/7. *Letter from Hamad b. Ahmad b. El-Imam and Shaikh of 'Yal Sa'd, to Major Miles, the Political Agent and Consul at Muscat.* Dated, 20th Rabee al-Akhir (6th June 1874).

¹¹³ I. O. R. R/15/6/7. See the same letter.

¹¹⁴ I. O. R. R/15/6/7. *Letter from Major Miles the Political Agent and Consul at Muscat, to the Shaikh of 'Yal Sa'd Hamad b. Ahmad. El-Imam.* Dated Muscat, 6th June 1874.

¹¹⁵ I. O. R. R/15/6/7. See the same letter.

¹¹⁶ I. O. R. R/15/6/7. *Letter from Hamad b. Ahmad, of 'Yal Sa'd, to the Political Agent and Consul at Muscat Major Miles.* Dated Rabee al-Akhir, 1291 (7th June 1874).

¹¹⁷ I. O. R. R/15/ 6/7. See the same letter.

¹¹⁸ I. O. R. R/15/6/7. See the same letter.

¹¹⁹ I. O. R. R/15/6/7. *Telegram from the Political Agent and Consul at Muscat, to the PRPG, Lt., Col., Ross.* Dated Muscat, 6th June 1874.

¹²⁰ R. O. vol. ii, *Precis of Muscat affairs 1872-1892*, p. 71.

¹²¹ R. O. vol. ii, *ibid.* p. 71.

¹²² I. O. R. R/15/6/7. *Telegram to the British Political Resident in the Persian Gulf Lt. Col. Edward Ross, from the Secretary to the Government of India.* Dated 13th June 1874.

¹²³ R. O. vol. ii, *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1872-92*, p. 80.

¹²⁴ After long negotiations between the 'Yal S'ad tribe's Shaikhs and the representative of the Sultan Sayyid Abd al-'Aziz the two parties had come to the following conclusion:

1. That these chiefs should bind themselves and find security to pay the sum of \$MT 1000 within three months from the date of this agreement.

2. That His Highness Sultan Turki should take upon himself the remaining 5,000 of indemnity in consideration of the entire submission of the 'Yal Sa'd tribe and their engaging to refrain from joining Ibrahim bin Qais. See the R.O. vol. ii, *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1872-92*, pp. 80-81; also Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 502.

¹²⁵ Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 502.

¹²⁶ Townsend, J., *Oman: The making of a modern State*, London; 1977, p. 45.

¹²⁷ *Report of the Administration of the Persian Gulf Political Residency... for the years 1873-75, the Commercial Appendices.* vol. i; Landen, 1968, p. 326.

¹²⁸ In January 1886, the Sultan of Muscat Sayyid Turki b. Sa'id expressed his apprehensions to the British Agent at Muscat concerning the intention of the Shaikh of Abū Dhabi, Zaid b. Khalifah, who it was rumoured intended to proceed against

Muscat's territory on the Batinah Coast. Accordingly the British Residency Agent at al-Sharjah, reported that Shaikh Zaid had placed himself in communication with the enemy tribes to the Sultan in al-Sharqiyyah, who were led by Ṣalīḥ b. 'Alī al-Ḥarṭhī, to rise against the Sultan with a view to disturbing the peace of Muscat territory. However, Shaikh Zaid had abandoned this intention of acting aggressively against the Sultan when he felt that his plan would not be successful, and reverted to his former friendly relationship with the Sultan. See the *Report on the Administration of the Persian Gulf and Muscat Political Agency for the Year 1885-86*, part 1, p. 6; Landen, 1968, p. 326.

¹²⁹ I. O. R. R/15/6/11. *Letter from Mohammed bin Turki, Governor of Sohar, to His Highness Sayyid Turki the Sultan of Muscat*. Dated, 21 Jumada al-Awwal, 1296 (14th May 1874).

¹³⁰ I. O. R. R/15/6/11. See the same letter.

¹³¹ Kalba, Khor Fakkan and al-Fujairah are the major towns in al-Shumayyiah area which extended from Diba to Khatmat Milahah north of Shinaṣ, on the Gulf of Oman. All these places are now in the United Arab Emirates. R. O. vol. ii, *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1872-92*, p. 201.

¹³² I. O. R. R/15/6/18. *Letter from Lt. Col. S. B. Miles, the Political Agent in the Persian Gulf and Consul for Fars, to Lt. Col. E. Mockler, H. B. M. Political Agent and Consul, Muscat*. Dated Bushire, 16 June 1886.

¹³³ I. O. R. R/15/6/18. *Letter from the Under Secretary to the Government of India to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, and the Consul for Fars*. Dated 7th July 1886.

¹³⁴ I. O. R. R/15/6/18. *Letter from H. H. the Sultan Sayyid Turki, to the Political Agent and Consul, Muscat*. Dated Muscat, 14th Shawwal 1303 (17th July 1886).

Sayyid Turki and Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz: Peace and Conflict 1874-1888

On the basis of events described in this study so far, the manner in which Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz came into conflict with his brother, the Sultan of Muscat, will be apparent. In 1874, Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz was being detained in Karachi under British surveillance at the request of Sultan Turki. The relations between the two brothers had presented many difficulties with regard to the rule of the country, and although they cooperated on some occasions on many others they were in conflict. The Sultan had a great deal of respect for his younger brother Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz, and one might assume the former deserved his assistance, but because Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz was continually under the influence of the Sultan's enemies, his activities were generally directed against his brother. Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz was a very active person and a good soldier. He established working relations with different tribes and Shaikhs inside Oman, mainly the al-Hirh and their chief Shaikh Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali. The shaikh used his influence to persuade Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz to rise against the Sultan with his support on various occasions.

It should be said that the Sultan maintained positive feelings towards Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz, despite the troubles which he caused and through which the Sultan's power in the country suffered considerable injury. However, throughout the Sultan's entire life relations with Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz were unsettled, with the one exception of the period between 'Abd al-'Aziz's arrival from Karachi in May 1874 and December 1875. During this period the main thrust of the Sultan's policy was to consolidate his power over the entire country, searching for a solution to his internal situation and seeking fidelity from the shaikhs throughout Oman. He decided that a way of maintaining a strong position in Oman would be to enlist the support of Sayyid

'Abd al-'Aziz. He decided to try and reconcile their differences, hoping that this would prompt Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz to offer him the support which the Sultan desperately needed at this stage of his reign. But these difficulties were not resolved, and Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz, was probably the main obstacle in the Sultan's political life from that time on.

The return of Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz to Oman was undoubtedly a result of the Sultan's efforts to persuade the British authorities in Muscat and the Persian Gulf to use their influence upon the Government of India and allow his return to Oman. The response to this question influenced British policy in the region. The British representatives in the Gulf and Muscat and the Indian authorities responded positively to the Sultan's request.

The permission for Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz to leave Karachi had been communicated to the Commissioner in Sind on 6th May, 1874. He had been asked to let Lt Colonel Ross accompany Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz to Muscat.¹ The Sultan saw Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz's arrival as a significant step forward in his relations with the Government of India. On 12th May 1874, the British Political Resident in the Persian Gulf reported to the Government of India that Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz had arrived in Muscat.² The Sultan welcomed Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz warmly, and the two brothers were now reunited, although the Sultan was now suffering from the illness which continued to afflict him until his death. Sultan Turki did not conceal from his brother any of his government's difficulties nor any detail of his position in relation to the continued disorder and disturbances in the country. The Sultan had considered Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz's return to Muscat as beneficial to his sovereignty, and though his strong support would be sure to consolidate the Sultan's position in Oman. Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz was appointed the Sultan's deputy in Muscat and the whole country.³ It may appear that Sultan Turki behaved somewhat naively towards Sayyid 'Abd al-

'Aziz, but the return of Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz to Muscat was conditional on Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz complying with the following:⁴

1. Sayyid 'Abd al 'Aziz was to display sincerity and benevolence to his brother Sultan Turki, and was to be in unity with him, and his guidance for the Sultan was to be moral.
2. He was to be friendly with the Sultan, and was to exclude all harmful wishes from his heart and was to be on good terms with the Sultan's government, ignoring all evil intentions.
3. He was to separate himself from any trouble-maker, or any hostile groups, and pay no attention to any of their requests which would affect the two brothers' relationship and draw them into enmity.

However Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz considered these points to be a mere written formality which were not obligatory and caused no restraint on him from acting against the Sultan's authority when the situation permitted him to do so.

Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz felt an opportune moment for his action against the Sultan soon after his arrival at Muscat, when he exploited the Sultan's weakness as a result of his illness. The Sultan's illness had seriously affected his position, and Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz exploited the situation effectively in concentrating the country's power in his hands. From early 1874, the Sultan's illness had noticeably affected his position in power; his authority was undermined as a result and his rule was resented by his enemies within the country.

5.1. Sultan Turki's consolidation of power in the country

By August 1874, Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais was at al-Ḥazim, following the settlement of the trouble on the Batinah coast which was discussed in Chapter Three in this study.

The situation in the interior of Oman did not remain in the Sultan's favour. Sayyid Ibrahim left al-Ḥazim shortly afterwards and proceeded towards al-Rustaq, and succeeded, with the support of the al-'Abriyyin tribe, in taking al-'Awabi district and Wadi Bani Kharūs. In al-'Awabi Sayyid Ibrahim prepared himself for the fight to strengthen his position with the intention of taking power in the country from the Sultan.⁵ On 11th August 1874, Lt. Colonel Miles reported that Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais now showed a disposition to withdraw from further opposition to the Sultan of Muscat, and had agreed to come to a better understanding with him. The Sultan's new wali for al-Suwaiq, Saif bin Ḥamud, had been approved by Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais, who proceeded towards al-Suwaiq to meet with him there in order to discuss the differences between himself and the Sultan of Oman. This meeting produced a satisfactory result.⁶ Sayyid Ibrahim again confirmed his obedience to Sultan Turki's authority, and his willingness to accept any allowance which could be offered by the government of the Sultan.

Notwithstanding, Lt. Colonel E. C. Ross, the Political Resident, in his report which was included in the Persian Gulf Administration Reports in 1875, drew attention to the fact that from the beginning of that year, the political situation in Oman was not favourable to peace and prosperity.⁷ Although the Sultan had been able to settle many of his problems through conciliation and emphasise his position as the only Ruler of the country, his health had affected his decision-making and had prevented him from dealing effectively with the remaining disturbances in his dominions. He became less energetic than at any time since taking power in the country. By the end of July 1874, the British Resident in the Gulf had obtained the Government of India's permission to pay six months of the Zanzibar subsidy in advance to the Sultan of Muscat, since the Sultan had, at his own financial cost, supported British operations on the Batinah coast during that year against Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais and his allies the 'Yal Sa'd.⁸ Sultan Turki urgently needed the money

at this stage for supporting his operations in the interior against the tribes of the Bani Reyam, who were looking for certain territorial gains in Nizwa and Birkat al-Mouz, a problem which had begun in September 1873. Samāil and Nizwa were particularly disturbed, due to the conflict between the Hinawi and the Ghafiri factions who were openly at war.⁹ All the Ghafiri tribes in the country as well as those of the Hinawi had prepared themselves for this conflict and were ready to take part in it.¹⁰

In these disturbances the Sultan had supported the Hinawi faction, and assisted them effectively not only with money but with force as well: he sent a field gun and ten artillery men to Izki to fortify the fort of the town, allowing its guard to join the main assault.¹¹ Sultan Turki was by this stage incapacitated by his illness and his strength had deteriorated, and so his mediation in this quarrel was provided by his representative. He was obliged to proceed towards the interior, so that he could bring this unsettled situation to a conclusion and left his brother Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz in charge of Muscat affairs. Soon after his arrival in Samāil he gained the Bani Reyam's (Ghafiri faction) submission to his authority, and finally an agreement between the two parties was reached. However, the dissent between the Hinawi and Ghafiri tribes in Oman had spread to involve the tribes of al-Zahirah district, where a satisfactory settlement was reached in June 1875.¹² Unfortunately it was not a settlement in which the Sultan could feel content: Because Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz outlined his dissent. Further complications arose as Sultan Turki's health began to fail.

On 14th May 1875, the Agent at Muscat, Lt. Colonel Miles, reported to the Residency at Bushire that Muscat was the scene of a dispute between the Sultan and the Bani Bū Hasan who had recently been replaced by the Baluchis and the Wahhabis in the garrisons of Muscat's forts.¹³ His brother, Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz, who was now the Governor of Muscat, managed to reconcile the dissatisfied tribes, granting all their claims under his brother's authority on condition that the tribe return to obeying the Sultan.¹⁴ Following this settlement, relations between the Sultan and the tribe of

Bani Bū Hasan appeared to continue in a friendly and satisfactory manner. But the most serious challenge to the Sultan emerged from his brother Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz, who was by this stage thinking of exploiting the Sultan's illness to his own advantage.

The British authorities' assessment of the situation in Muscat was that it was being adversely affected by the Sultan's health. They observed that given the circumstances of the time, it was impossible to look with confidence to a secure continuity of the Sultan's rule. The Sultan informed the British Political Agent at Muscat about the settlement between him and part of the Hinawi tribes, and noted that an agreement between himself and his brother Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz had also been achieved in order to pacify the situation in Muscat.¹⁵ As for the situation with his brother Sayyid 'Abd al 'Aziz, the Sultan wrote to the Political Agent informing him about the new agreement in which the Sultan had agreed to make him his consultant and adviser. The Sultan had also agreed to follow his brother's advice in the expenditure of the customs and revenues of Muscat, and had dismissed Namish his old servant in the custom house.¹⁶ In fact the Sultan had given Sayyid 'Abd al 'Aziz great access to his affairs in order to keep him under his control. The following responsibilities had been turned over to him:

"All payments, non-payments, increments and reductions of subsidies and salaries be in accordance with my advice. That he be allowed to exercise my discretion in regulating the allowances to be given to the Governors of fortresses, soldiers, and other servants of the Government. Secondly, that in all matters relating to politics my advice be followed; if I consider anything determined to the well being of the Government and require its discontinuance a withdrawal of it shall be done, as also should I consider anything essential to the prosperity of the State it shall likewise be granted".¹⁷

However, the quarrel between the Sultan and his brother over the custom house, and over the Sultan's relations with the Hinawi tribes were considered to be slightly different from those which had faced the Sultan on previous occasions since his deputy governor Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz, was now on the Sultan's side. Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz undoubtedly saw this opportunity as an auspicious omen of his political

future in the country, since the Sultan was affected by his illness and so in a weak position to deal with the major disputes in Muscat's affairs. This led the disaffected tribes in the interior to rejoice at his weakness and strengthen Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz's status.

In fact the new arrangement which was reached in July 1875 between the two brothers was soon affected when differences about internal policy forced Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz to abandon the settlement and submit his resignation to his brother Sultan Turki. This happened on 10th August 1875, when the Sultan refused Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz's demands to dismiss the Baluchi garrison from the forts of Muscat. Sultan Turki and carried on his rule of the country without Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz's support for a few days. The tribal Arabs were anxious to replace the Baluchi in those positions, and the Sultan was then forced to accept their wishes and to surrender the forts to their guardianship.¹⁸

5.2. Sultan Turki's temporary retirement to Gwader

5.2.1. *The recognition of Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz*

Following the difficulties from which the Sultan had suffered, he prepared for a short break away from Oman and its burdens. On 14th August 1875, the Sultan wrote to the Political Agent at Muscat, mentioning the situation between him and his brother Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz. He informed the Agent that the new differences between them had led to more disturbances because of the plotting of dissidents who hoped for the separation of the two brothers. However, his wish to keep the unity with Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz was very important for the strength of the country and the conciliation of its disputes.¹⁹ The Sultan had realised that the suppression of such a dispute, which had been revived by those who were interested in seeing him in dispute with his brother, should not be allowed to come between them. He came to the conclusion that any attempt at long-term peace in the country could be frustrated by this dispute with

his brother and the affairs of Muscat might be injured. Accordingly the Sultan authorised his brother Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz to act as he saw best in the interests of Oman and its people, because the Sultan's health prevented him from acting positively himself to fulfil this design.²⁰

On 15th August 1875, the Sultan confirmed his wishes to Lt. Colonel Miles in another letter: he had decided to retire to his dominion on the Mekran Coast of Gwader, and had officially appointed his brother Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz to act as his Naib or representative, and empowered him to carry on the government of Oman during his absence as he wished.²¹ The Sultan had instructed him to show every favour and indulgence towards the British subjects in Muscat, and added that he hoped that the Political Agent at Muscat would look upon Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz favourably as Sultan, and be close to his government.²²

5.2.2. The Sultan's departure for Gwader

The Sultan found that he had undertaken more than he could physically cope with, given his poor health. He realised he was unable to carry on the government of Oman, even with the support provided by the British. The Sultan had also found himself under strong pressure from the disaffection of those tribes which had been granted his favour and been made his official royal guards. On 15th August 1875, and after the above-mentioned disturbances against his authority, as well as from his brother in some respects, Sultan Turki boarded the corvette *al-Rahmani* and left for Gwader, appointing Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz to act in full liberty as governor of the whole country during his leave with the exception of Gwader which was to remain under his direct command.²³ Accordingly, the British Political Agent at Muscat ordered certain precautions be taken for the protection of British interests in Muscat, as he was fearful of the confusion which might follow the departure of the Sultan to Gwader. He requested Captain Fort of H. M. S. *Daphne* to come to Muscat from

Karachi, and the Political Resident in the Gulf instructed H.M.S. *Hugh Ross*, the Residency steamer, to be ready to meet any order from the Political Agent at Muscat. Meanwhile the vessel *Rifleman* was instructed to carry the Sultan to Gwader.²⁴ The Sultan left Muscat on 21st August 1875, having assured the Political Agent, Lt. Colonel Miles that as soon as he recovered his health his return to Muscat would ensure the continuation of his rule of the country.²⁵

The Sultan's health problems had affected him so much, that when he took over the rule of the country his physical appearance had led many of the tribes in Oman to consider him as an easy target, but his accession had been accepted by the British, who had offered him solid support after his success in taking power in the country. The Sultan's energy and his military qualifications, upon which he depended for successfully ruling to the throne of the country soon became affected by his illness. In fact the Sultan's side had also been affected by the following factors:²⁶

1. The desertion of his old allies among the Ghafiri tribes, to whom he was totally indebted for his strong position at the beginning of his political life.

2. The success of Shaikh Ṣaliḥ b. 'Alī in his campaigns against Muscat with the assistance of the Hinawi tribes of al-Sharqiyyah, was another point which contributed to the deterioration of the Sultan's position in Oman.

3. Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais's repeated operations along the Batinah coast, also played their part, as did in addition to Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz's activities, which showed the Sultan's power to be without a real foundation at this time.

4. The Sultan's favours to the Hinawi tribes and the support of the Baluchis did not appear quite enough to assure his strong position during the first period of his reign. For all these reasons, the Sultan was unable to deal with his internal

difficulties, or use the skill which he would later demonstrate during the second period of his rule.

5.2.3. *Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz's difficulties in his new appointment*

As noted above Sultan Turki retired to Gwader, he entrusted the country and its financial arrangements to his brother Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz, allocating himself an amount of \$MT 1,000 a month and requesting Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz to keep paying him that sum while he stayed at Gwader.²⁷ Though the financial position of Oman after the departure of the Sultan was very damaged, Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz managed to deal with it successfully; sending the Sultan's monthly amount to Gwader showed his diplomatic skill.²⁸ Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz was faced with another problem soon after his occupation of the new position, when a large number of Omanis protested against his success. This showed their ability to cause the state harm at any time. Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz appeared confident with the main support which came from Shaikh Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali, who prepared himself to come to his aid from the moment Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz's appearance on the throne. He arrived in Muscat leading 400 men, chiefly Hinawis, and entered into an agreement to assist him in governing the Sultanate; Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz appointed him to be his first adviser.²⁹

Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz became more popular and his authority soon increased: he seemed to be more widely accepted each day. Most of the Hinawi tribes in Oman promised to offer their support to the new ruler of the country, although most of the Ghafiri tribes remained detached from the new authority in Muscat.³⁰ But gradually the Ghafiri tribes befriended Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz, and some of their Shaikhs visited Muscat to promise their submission to his authority, only two months after his accession to power.³¹ It is clear that the position of Shaikh Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali in the new government influenced and affected the other tribes, especially the Ghafiri faction which felt that his position had become more influential in shaping Sayyid 'Abd al-

'Aziz's policy. However, many of these tribes, like the Bani Reyam, Bani Jaber, Janabah, and the Bani Bū 'Ali clearly did not recognise the sovereignty of the new regime. Not only these but even the wali of Sohar, Badr b. Saif resisted Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz's authority with help from the Bani al-Na'im tribe of al-Buraimi district.³² In addition to these internal problems, the situation in the country was affected by an external event.

On 24th September 1875, the ex-Sultan Sayyid Sālim b. Thuwaini crossed in a native *Baghlah* from Qishm towards Oman with the intention of taking power from Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz. The Political Agent at Muscat was fully aware of this development and soon after the news of this attempt reached the Agency he requested H.M.S. *Daphne* to arrest Sayyid Sālim and to block his move. On October 11th Sayyid Sālim was seen off Suwadi on the Batinah coast where the British detained him. The Political Resident in the Gulf, Lt. Colonel Ross, immediately directed the Commander of the *Daphne* to take him prisoner to Hyderabad fort, where he died of smallpox on 7th December 1876, as already mentioned in Chapter Four.³³

The official British attitude towards Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz's reign was to consider him as a representative of the Sultan in power during his leave, and they rejected Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz's request for recognition as the Sultan of Oman and refused to offer him any military aid. They made it clear to him that if any military assistance were provided by them in urgent circumstances, or in the case of a grave emergency at Muscat, it would only be in answer to a written request in the name of Sultan Turki.³⁴ These conditions were strong enough to ensure that, if he was considering declaring himself ruler of Oman, the British would certainly prevent him from doing so, and his authority would meet with no recognition.

On 5th October Shaikh Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali al-Ḥarthi left Muscat for al-Sharqiyyah, where he was engaged to watch the situation on behalf of his ally Sayyid 'Abd al-

'Aziz.³⁵ The new government also had direct interest in this province, namely to pacify the jealous attitude of the Ghafiri tribes to the position of Ṣaliḥ b. 'Alī and his prestige in the new government.

5.3. Sultan Turki's abrupt restoration to the Throne

At this time Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz was in a position where he was obliged to affirm his appearance as ruler of Muscat throughout the whole country and to force the dissident tribes to come under his direct influence. To achieve this object, Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz had left Muscat on 11th December 1875 in the direction of Barka, and then headed to Samāil with the aim, it was believed, of replacing the Ghafiri garrison of the town's fort with one based on the Hinawi tribe. He left the affairs of Muscat under the control of Sayyid Muhammad b. 'Azzan.³⁶

By this time Sultan Turki had recovered his physical health and spirits, and felt he was sufficiently strong to resume his country's rule. On the night of 13th December, the Sultan arrived in Matrah unexpectedly, crossing from Gwader on board a native baghlah. The town's fort was guarded by the Baluchi who immediately submitted to the Sultan and accepted his return without any resistance.³⁷ At this juncture Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz was still in Samāil, where he wrote to the acting Governor of Muscat, Muhammad b. 'Azzan, requesting the defence of Muscat to be continued. He would collect as many men as he could, and come to their assistance soon.³⁸

The Sultan was now planning to retake Muscat, but he was prevented from doing so by the Bani Bū Hasan garrison in Muscat's fort. The Sultan communicated on 14th December 1875 with the Political Agent at Muscat, Lt. Colonel Miles, informing him of his arrival and of his obtaining possession of Matrah. The Sultan then sent a delegation to the Political Agent in Muscat, consisting of Sa'id b. Khamis and 'Alī b. Ḥusain stating that soon after he had regained Matrah, Muscat had shown

strong resistance. The Sultan therefore requested British assistance in preventing the arrival of any Arabs from the interior to Muscat by sea.³⁹ Sultan Turki added that it was his obligation to inform the Political Agent that if or when the Bedouin arrived in Muscat, the situation would undoubtedly become more complicated and efforts towards a settlement would achieve nothing. The Sultan also informed the Agent that Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz was only his representative during his absence and while he was on good terms with him, Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz had begun to oppose the official authority and had strongly encouraged Muscat's garrison to stand against the Sultan. Therefore, Sultan Turki informed Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz that he was to be removed from his position of power since it was clear to him, the Sultan, that much of the dissent in the country had been fostered by Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz.⁴⁰ Sultan Turki then addressed another letter to the Agent on 18th December, stating that he was preparing to attack Muscat on the following day.⁴¹ He left Matrah on board a boat flying the British flag and with a number of Omanis on board planning to attack the capital.⁴² On 19th December the Sultan was joined by a force of Ghafiri tribes from Nakhal, and they took possession of the areas surrounding Muscat, while another attack on Muscat from the sea was maintained by his force for two days, with losses on both sides.⁴³ Following this incident the Government of India instructed their representative in the region that from now on the correspondence with Muscat should be made directly to Sayyid Turki as the Sultan of Muscat.⁴⁴ This was a clear enough indication to Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz that he was no longer the authorised ruler of the country, and he had to resign himself to being just one of the Sultan's subjects.

Sultan Turki quickly set about reinstating his position as ruler of Oman and wasted no time in preparing for the final attack on Muscat. On 19th December 1875, the Sultan wrote to the Political Agent about the action he planned that would confirm his position in the country. He sent his messenger to Samāil as this was a wise political move with respect to the Sultanate's internal situation: the Sultan wanted was

to regain his position among the Hinawi tribes there, and he managed to bring Shaikh Ḥamud b. Sa'id al-Jahhafi of al-Wahibah of the Hinawi faction to Muscat to reconcile their differences.⁴⁵ The Sultan had also sent the Agent a letter he had received from the Bani Bū Hasan, part of the Hinawi faction, in which they were prepared to offer the Sultan their allegiance. Sayyid Turki also informed the Political Agent that he had already managed to collect his force from both factions, the Hinawi and the Ghafiri, to attack Muscat. The Sultan requested the Political Agent in Muscat to send him any useful advice which could help to bring the opposition party to a settlement, so that the otherwise inevitable conflict with his brother's force could be avoided.⁴⁶

On December 21st the opposition party in Muscat offered to surrender to the Sultan, and agreed to enter into negotiations with him. These were completed when the Sultan entered Muscat with his troops and resumed charge of the Government.⁴⁷ On 30th December the British Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, Lt. Colonel Ross, telegraphed the Government of India to say that all the forts of Muscat should show their respect to Sultan Turki with no further opposition. Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz was still in Samāil with a small force, and the Sultan requested the Political Agent in Muscat to prevent Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz from coming to Muscat by sea.⁴⁸ In response the Government of India replied that it did not wish to interfere in the internal dispute between the Sultan and his brother unless British interests were directly affected.⁴⁹

However, the British Political Resident in the Gulf, writing to the Sultan, showed his displeasure with Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz regarding the outbreak of hostilities with the Sultan after the amicable relations which had been achieved after the latter's return from Karachi. In his letter to the Sultan of 31st December 1875, Lt. Colonel Ross expressed his wishes for the unity of the Sultanate and her people, and recommended an intelligent conciliation of the continued dispute between the two brothers. This would undoubtedly benefit the country and her people. Ross also conveyed to the Sultan the British satisfaction regarding the Sultan's kind response to

the British subjects and their interests in Muscat after his return, (this had been in response to a request from the Political Agent in Muscat).⁵⁰

The British authorities in India immediately recognised the restoration of the Sultan's power in Oman: they considered his absence in Gwader to be only a rest because of his illness. Whether the Sultan had officially announced his return or not, he had already made arrangements regarding this controversial issue with the British before his departure for Gwader. The Government of India were also interested in seeing a settled situation in Oman, while the dispute over the sultanate in the country had caused them serious trouble and expenditure when they offered their military support for the Sultan against his enemies.

By the end of December 1875 Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz had left his position in Samāil and had headed for Samad, to join his main ally Shaikh Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali to work out his next move with him. However, he was completely without funds. Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz started planning for his future, while the situation in the country seemed to be quiet, and the Sultan Sayyid Turki was progressing towards stronger government. Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz communicated with the Sultan from Samad, asking him to grant him Samāil fort, and to pay him an allowance of \$MT 500.⁵¹ The Sultan refused his request and instructed his wali in Sohar, and the most powerful commander in his service, Badr b. Saif Al Bū Sa'idi, who was conducting the operations against Samāil, to enter into negotiations with Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz for an arrangement. The mission was successful, and the Sultan took possession of the fort of Samāil in February 1876 and controlled the situation by the deployment of his garrison there.⁵²

Afterwards Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz found himself obliged to oppose the Sultan, and resolved as soon as he could to collect a reasonable force and enough support to fight to regain his position in Samāil, if not over the entire country. From then

onwards Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz remained in open hostilities with his brother the Sultan, but without any acknowledged success, and the British Government tried many times without real success to bring this disturbance to a settlement.

5.4. Ṣaliḥ b. 'Alī and al-Jahhafi's Campaign Against the Sultan

Sultan Turki was now faced with another difficulty from another trouble-maker, Ḥamud b. Sa'id al-Jahhafi, who renounced his friendship with the Sultan. He became the leader of the main campaign in Oman against the authority of the Sultan during the year 1876. He started his main operations on the Batinah coast, which extended to the surrounding areas of Muscat like Hail al-'Awamir in Seeb. In September 1876 Ḥamud al-Jahhafi, without approval or assistance from any of the Sultan's opponents, such as Ṣaliḥ b. 'Alī, Ibrahim b. Qais or even Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz, attacked al-Seeb via al-Rustaq, and plundered the town's market and property.⁵³ When the Sultan learned about this attack, he immediately sent a force of 700-800 men under the command of Badr b. Saif to al-Seeb, but when these troops arrived they found al-Jahhafi had already proceeded to Ṣaḥam, where he seized Banian goods to the value of worth Rs. 5000. He allied himself with the al-Ma'awili tribe in Wadi al-Ma'awil, who had been in a continued dispute with the Sultan's authority.⁵⁴

The British abstained from involvement in this quarrel, and preferred the Sultan to use his own resources against al-Jahhafi. The Sultan managed to expel al-Jahhafi and proceeded to Barka, which was exposed to a new raid by Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais. Sayyid Ibrahim's operations ended unsuccessfully when the tribe of 'Yal Sa'd refused to offer him the required assistance to accomplish this move.⁵⁵ By the end of the year, Sultan Sayyid Turki had achieved another arrangement with Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais, by which the conflict between them had been settled again and trade resumed on the Batinah coast. Ḥamud al-Jahhafi was induced by the Sultan to retire to al-Sharqiyyah district on the payment of a sum of money.⁵⁶

During the second part of 1876, the Sultan's position in the country rapidly improved. This fact was confirmed by Lt. Colonel Miles's trip to al-Jabal al-Akhdar, where he found the situation quiet, settled and peaceful, and the Sultan's authority in this district well-exercised. He clearly stated that the safety of his tour was the responsibility of the Sultan, who instructed him to make the necessary arrangements with the tribes to provide the Agent with a suitable escort during his journey in the interior of Oman.⁵⁷ Although the Sultan's power over the tribes of the interior had been restored, the situation there remained the main issue in the Sultan's internal policy.

However, the Sultan's main problem at this stage was the dispute with his brother Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz, who was under the influence of Shaikh Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali, who became Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz's adviser in any offer by the Sultan to ease the dispute between them. Shaikh Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali represented Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz with the Sultan and had been deputed by Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz either to accept or to reject the Sultan's offers of settlement.⁵⁸ In May 1876 the Sultan offered Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz a monthly allowance of \$MT 500 on condition that he should leave the country and agree to reside anywhere he liked in India, but he declined the offer. In August 1876, Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali had suggested that Sultan Turki should allow Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz to reside in al-Seeb, or somewhere else where he could not sustain intrigue, but the Sultan rejected this suggestion, and no settlement was achieved.⁵⁹

The Sultan was now in conflict with Shaikh Ṣaliḥ bin 'Ali. The latter prepared himself with the support of the al-Sharqiyyah tribes for another attempt to attack Muscat and overthrow the Sultan. In April 1877 his plans were well known in the district, and this resulted in persuading the tribes there to rebel against the Sultan's authority under his leadership. The Sultan tried to buy him off with an allowance, but disagreement arose about the monthly payment.⁶⁰ Ṣaliḥ then proceeded towards Muscat accompanied by forces from the al-Sharqiyyah tribes and assisted by Ḥamud

b. Sa'id al-Jahhafi, but they failed to persuade Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz who refrained from joining them. On 14th June 1877 Shaikh Ṣaliḥ was able to take Matrah without notable resistance from the Sultan's garrison in the town.⁶¹ Muscat was threatened, and the British realised that their interests also seemed to be at risk. The Sultan himself asked the Acting British Agent at Muscat, Mr. P.J.C. Robertson, for military support against the rebel. At this time Mr. Robertson had no available gun-boat, but when the gun-boat H.M.S. *Teazer* arrived in Muscat on 15th June, the Sultan's hope of assistance was revived.⁶² Two days later the rebellion spread to another location on the Batinah coast, where Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais joined the manoeuvres. The Sultan's position in Muscat was weakened: the small number who defended the capital, about 200 men, faced attackers estimated at totalling 1000 to 1500 fighting men.⁶³ The Sultan's wishes were carried out when the *Teazer* fired on the rebels on 18th June 1877. This induced the rebels to enter into negotiations with the Sultan on the following day and he insisted upon their retreating from their location in Matrah, some parts of Muscat and the places around them, and entering negotiations very quickly. Thus the rebels had no option but to comply with the Sultan's orders.⁶⁴ The Government of India signified approval of the action which had been taken by the Acting Political Agent at Muscat.

When negotiations between the Sultan and the rebels took place in Muscat the Sultan refused all the conditions laid down by Ṣaliḥ bin 'Ali al-Ḥarthi if he were to agree to retire from Muscat and its territory. Ṣaliḥ finally complied with the Sultan's order and left Muscat for Samad, while Ibrahim proceeded to al-Rustaq.⁶⁵ However, the Sultan realised that the threat from Ḥamud al-Jahhafi against his authority would continue to affect the Sultan's position on the Batinah coast if he rejected all Hamad's claims. In the end a settlement was reached and the Sultan agreed to pay him a amount of \$MT 2500 to ensure that his subjects in that area would be treated with respect.⁶⁶

Meanwhile, the Sultan's foreign relations at this stage showed his determination to rule effectively. In July 1877, Sultan Turki b. Sa'id exchanged a Commercial Declaration with Holland, in which the Dutch Consul at Bushire requested the co-operation of the British Resident, and this was successfully dealt with.⁶⁷

5.5. The renewal of the hostilities between Turki and 'Abd al-'Aziz

Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz b. Sa'id was at Samad during the troubles caused by Ṣaliḥ and al-Jahhafi, but in September 1877 he started his own activities against his brother: he left Samad for Ja'alan to urge the Bani Bū Hasan to join him in his future struggle with Sultan Turki and his plan to invade Muscat. The tribes there declined to offer him the required support, and his action on this matter ceased as a result.⁶⁸ Nevertheless, Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz remained in contact with some paramount figures among the Omani shaikhs. He was in regular contact with Shaikh Ḥamad bin Sa'id b. 'Ali al-Barwani in al-Sharqiyyah, who suggested that he should leave the country for India to ease his relations with Sultan Turki and leave the affairs of the country to him. Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz could certainly not accept this advice, as his desire was to remain in Oman to resist the manoeuvres of the Sultan.⁶⁹ Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz then visited Shaikh Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali at Samad to discuss the former issue with him, but their views differed and nothing came of this meeting; and Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz returned to Ja'alan to be with his main supporters among the Ban Bū Hasan.

On 14th January 1878 Lt. Colonel Miles, who by now had returned to his position as the Political Agent and Consul at Muscat, became involved in the matter of Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz's attempt to rise against his brother.⁷⁰ The Agent informed the Political Resident, Lt. Colonel Ross, that one of the effective supporters of Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz was Shaikh Khamis b. Rashid of the Bani Bū Hasan, one of the Sultan's former prisoners, who had arrived in Muscat from Sur with about 60

followers. The subject of Khamis's visit was to induce the Sultan to grant his brother Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz a pension through him, with permission to let him stay in Oman.⁷¹ When these two matters were first submitted to him the Sultan very quickly rejected the requests, and asked the shaikh not to bring them up again. In fact the Sultan gave his promise to give more consideration to the question of his brother's residency in Oman, and his reply on this matter would be given subsequently.⁷² Unfortunately the open activities of Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz against his brother's supremacy induced the latter to reject the request to allow Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz to reside in Oman whatever the circumstances, but he agreed again to offer him the previous allowance if Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz would accept residency in India. But none of this took place, the hostilities between them worsened, and the situation continued without any conciliation.

Subsequent to this the Sultan received letters and reports from various Shaikhs in the interior, commenting on the movements of Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz and the efforts of Shaikh Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali to organise a fresh coalition from the tribes of the interior to revolt against the Sultan and to overthrow him. Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz had already left his position in Ja'alan for al-Qābel, where he held a meeting with Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali to assure him of his support in this attempt, but nothing serious emerged from this interview and Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz found himself without Ṣaliḥ's support for the first time when he advanced to Samāil by himself.⁷³

The campaign appeared to have collapsed, as Shaikh Ṣaliḥ bin 'Ali had been unable to give his support to Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz's efforts to provoke rebellion. Accordingly, the Sultan informed the Agent at Muscat officially about Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz's plans for intrigues against the Sultan's possessions, supported by some of the al-Sharqiyyah tribes, though his efforts to effect a coalition with Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali appeared to be unsuccessful. In spite of all these troubles, as a result of the Sultan's efforts the

internal situation in Oman was calmer, and there was a harmony over all the forts in the country.⁷⁴

Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz desperately insisted on encouraging the people of al-Sharqiyyah to give him their support after his failure in his attempts to bring al-Ḥarthi to his aid. In April 1878, he felt that he was ready to leave Ja'alan, and proceeded towards Muscat, leading a force of 300 fighting men. The Sultan immediately asked the British Agent for military assistance against any such attack upon Muscat.⁷⁵ The Government of India did not delay in approving the same action, taken by the Acting Political Agent Mr. Robertson, during the former operations against Muscat under the leadership of Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali al-Ḥarthi. Moreover Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz failed to proceed beyond Samāil, and subsequently, he retired to Samad.⁷⁶ In the following month the Sultan's position had gained some strength through the gift of a steamer from his brother in Zanzibar, Sayyid Barghash, which reached Muscat on 29th May 1878. The British Political Agent at Muscat showed his readiness to cooperate with the Sultan to keep the steamer in his service. He immediately informed the Sultan that he would offer such quantity of coal for the steamer, the *Dar al-Salaam* as might be required. This was to come from the Government of India Depot until the Sultan's own arrangements, for coal supply were completed.⁷⁷ The steamer soon became ready for the Sultan's service, and full a supply of coal on board was assured.

By this stage the Sultan had managed to increase his power in the country and exercise his authority over most of the Omani tribes and he settled almost all of his troubles during the following year. On 2nd January 1879, the Sultan succeeded in gaining the submission of the most powerful Shaikhs such as 'Amir bin Ṣaliḥ, Rashid b. Juma of the Bani Bū Hasan, Ḥamud b. Sa'id al-Jahhafi and his brother 'Ali b. Sa'id al-Jahhafi of al-Wahibah.⁷⁸ But Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz and Shaikh Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali remained the main source of trouble to the Sultan's authority. The Political Agent at Muscat agreed to put Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz's activities under surveillance on behalf of

the Sultan, and he communicated with Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz on many different occasions urging him to cease hostilities against his brother and to return to his allegiance. However, Sayyid 'Abd al 'Aziz considered this advice unacceptable.⁷⁹ Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz was not likely to challenge the Sultan's authority if he were to remain separated from Ṣāliḥ b. 'Alī's coalition. Sultan Turki's popularity was growing among the tribes in the country, and there was no obvious sign of disturbances for the following three years.

5.6. Some Aspects of the Sultan's internal affairs 1879-81

5.6.1. *The Sultan's trouble in Ras al-Ḥadd*

However the most troublesome dispute during the year 1879, in which the British were involved indirectly, was the dispute between the Janabah of Sur and the tribe of Ras al-Ḥadd and Khor-Jarama a few kilometres east of Sur. This was regarding the free use of the inlet by the Suris. The Sultan wrote to the British Political Agent at Muscat, Major C. B. Euan Smith, as follows:

"What we have to represent is that invariably the people of Ras al-Ḥadd oppress the craft which seek shelter in Khor Jarama without reason for so doing. We have dissuaded them from such acts because the craft of various nations request the Khor, and some of them carry the British flag, while the rest carry the goods of British subjects. In the days when our friend Mr. Robertson was here, he sent a man-of-war and in her was one of our officers. Since then no oppression has been practised, but now we hear of the immediate closing of the Khor again and our vessel not being here, and we are compelled to trouble you and solicit your assistance against these troublesome people, by asking you to despatch a man-of-war thither".⁸⁰

The Political Agent replied to the Sultan in a positive manner, by contacting the the Naval Officer requesting that one of the British ships visit the place. H.M.S. *Ready* was instructed to advance to Khor Jarama and Ras al-Ḥadd via Sur, under the Command of Naval Officer Edward. He helped to negotiate a settlement, and reported to the Agent that the respective chiefs had confirmed their promise not to close the inlet

in any way in future.⁸¹ Communications between the British officials in the region and the British Government of India continued to follow up the situation. On 31st October 1879 Lt. Colonel Ross, the Resident in the Persian Gulf, wrote to Major C. B. Euan Smith from Bushire acknowledging his actions and expressed his support for the action taken by Major Smith in requesting the Naval Officer of *Ready* to represent the British in the quarrel and instructing him not to be involved directly.⁸² The Government of India in reply to the correspondence with the Political Agent at Muscat regarding to the quarrel endorsed all the measures adopted by the Naval Officer to settle that dispute, and approved the Agent's action in the matters.⁸³

When this quarrel arose again in December 1880, Commander Cuning of H.M.S. *Woodlark* and the Sultan's steamer *Dar-al-Salaam* were instructed to proceed to Sur to watch over the British interests there and to investigate the cause of the new quarrel, which by this mission was brought to a final conclusion.⁸⁴

5.6.2. *The Sultan strengthens his position in the interior*

The settlement of the Janabah dispute with the Malkhi tribe of Ras al-Hadd, further strengthened the Sultan's position and his influence was felt all over the country. In November 1880 the Sultan despatched his son Sayyid Faisal b. Turki to Nizwa to assert his power there. During this month, Sayyid Faisal was able to confirm his father's authority at Nizwa and the surrounding area, and a salute of 21 guns was fired at Muscat on this occasion in recognition of this. The Sultan then appointed him as Wali of Nizwa in the same month, under the supervision of Sayyid Hamud bin Saif Al Bū Sa'idi who had held this position for many years. This was as a privilege granted by the Sultan with the promise of support from Shaikh Hilal bin Zaher al-Hinaei.⁸⁵ Sayyid Faisal reported to his father from Nizwa on 21st Dhu'l Hijjaah 1297, (20th November 1880) informing him about the situation in the district and the allegiance of its people, and confirming the full submission of Izki, Berkāt al-Mouz and the

surrounding area to the Sultan's authority. There was no mention of any troubles. Sayyid Faisal also obtained the submission of the Dhuru'a, the Janabah of the interior, and the Bani Hinah tribes.⁸⁶ In a subsequent letter Sayyid Faisal b. Turki mentioned the assistance which he had received from Shaikh Hilal b. Zaher asserting the authority of the Sultan in the interior, especially during the trouble with the Bani Rawahah in late 1880 which had been suppressed with his support.⁸⁷ Sultan Turki, the eldest son of Sayyid Muhhammed bin Turki was appointed as Governor of Sohar from 1878, to the Sultan's death in 1888.⁸⁸

At this stage Oman was enjoying a relatively peaceful time: since the last attempted revolt by Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz in July 1878 there had been no serious dispute with the Sultan's rule from either Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali or Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz, and the Sultan had sustained his authority throughout the whole Sultanate from north to south. The appointment of his son Sayyid Faisal as Wali of Nizwa and its surrounding area, of Sayyid Fahed as Wali in Barka, of Sayyid Mohammed as Governor of Sohar, of Sulaymān b. Suwailim as his Wali in Dhofar, the receiving of his brother's gift of the *Dar-al-Salaam* and the British support for his government all contributed to strengthening his position in Oman during this period.

The Sultan also managed to demonstrate his ability to settle his difficulties and used skill and intelligence to affirm his position. All the country's tribes had shown their allegiance and respected the state's security, and all over the country his garrisons had exerted the Sultan's influence peacefully. Under all these circumstances, the calm situation in the country had created a good opportunity for the Sultan to develop his foreign relationships. In August 1880 Louis Maguire, a British merchant trading and residing in Muscat, became the Consul of the United States of America.⁸⁹ Mr. Maguire was also recognised by the Sultan as the French Consular Agent for the Sultan's dominions in April 1881.⁹⁰

5.6.3. Sultan Turki's suggestion of relinquishing power to Sayyid Barghash

Though the Sultan seemed secure in ruling his country during the previous years and his position was recognised at a high level, he had been through difficult and agonizing experiences since his return to power in December 1875. These had greatly affected his activities and his interest in ruling the Sultanate. As noted above, there were troubles between the Omani tribes, the revolts of Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais and Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali, disputes about the Sultan's authority, and the problem of his brother Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz who was determined to extend his influence in the country and acted vigorously to replace him in power. This accumulation of events had persuaded the Sultan to suggest that he relinquish his power in Oman to his brother Sultan Barghash of Zanzibar, who was now in amicable relations with him. The issue was very serious. The British Government of India, who at this time had built a strong relationship with the Sultan, enjoyed freedom of movement for their Agent and Representatives throughout the country. These good relations with Muscat, which had been confirmed through the correspondence between the Sultan and the Government of India, cannot be easily dismissed. On 8th June 1880 the Viceroy and the Governor-General of India Sir Edward Robert Lytton stated in his letter to the Sultan that the friendly relationships between the Government of India and the Government of Muscat, which had so long continued with benefit to both the Sultanate and the Government of India, would be strengthened in future.⁹¹ The letter was sent on the occasion of the Viceroy's departure from office in India. As soon as his successor George Frederick Ripon replaced him, he wrote to the Sultan about the present good understanding between the Government of India and the Sultan's Government, and that the British Government would assist him to strengthen his position and the continued welfare and prosperity of his country.⁹² The Government of India was clearly interested in continuing the friendly relations and assurances which had been given by the former Viceroy.

In accordance with all these assurances to Sultan Turki, the Government of India soon became involved in the issue of his proposed abdication, and considered the consequences of this. The Government of India had strong objections to any possible unity between Oman and Zanzibar, and promised the Sultan of Muscat all possible assistance if he felt that he would be unable to deal with all these difficulties without British assistance at any time of dispute in the country. The British made it clear to Sultan Turki that they wanted the present situation to continue.

When the proposal appeared likely to be put into effect, the British Agent and Consul at Zanzibar, Dr. Kirk, reported on 8th March 1880 that Sayyid Turki was aware of his inability to rule over the trouble-makers in Oman, and that he was indeed thinking of abdicating his throne to his brother in Zanzibar, Sayyid Barghash b. Sa'id, and that Sultan Turki had already communicated with Barghash on this subject. Sultan Turki was strongly in favour of retiring to a foreign country, and the matter was planned for discussion either at Muscat or Zanzibar.⁹³ However, the British Resident in the Gulf, in relation to this matter, stated that no official news had transpired at Bushire or at the Muscat Agency till now, and he kept in touch with the Political Agency in Muscat to follow up the situation there. On the 8th April 1881, one year later, the Resident in the Persian Gulf, confirmed for the Government of India that the Political Agent at Muscat had ascertained that the negotiations between the Sultans of Muscat and Zanzibar had undoubtedly taken place and were no longer a secret issue, becoming the topic of street conversation in Muscat.⁹⁴ Sultan Turki was very anxious about his position and his health problems, which he considered might cause his sudden death. Then the succession would be disputed. This issue was the topic for discussion with the British officials in India.⁹⁵

The Sultan's power at that time was regarded as strongly established, and his authority during his lifetime was unlikely to be seriously disturbed in Oman. But his health was in an unstable state, and in case of his sudden death, the whole country

would undoubtedly be brought into dynastic disorder. Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz and his main supporter Shaikh Ṣalīḥ b. 'Alī would never accept any of Sultan Turki's sons as be the head of the Sultanate in these circumstances. Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais was also a strong figure and was supported by a large number of tribes, even by Ṣalīḥ b. 'Alī himself, who would have easy access to the Batinah coast during a time of disturbances.

Accordingly the British policy which had been adopted by the Government of India with regard to the succession, to work towards stability without direct internal involvement, was to offer asylum to the Sultan's sons, if their personal safety was threatened and if they were determined to avoid any conflict for the throne and to seek the protection of the British Government.⁹⁶ Miles's views were supported by Government policy, which offered protection to the Sultan's sons from any immediate danger. In fact the issue was passed to the British Political Resident in the Gulf, to be guided by the situation in the Sultanate.⁹⁷

The Government of India realised that the Sultan's intention to relinquish his throne to the Sultan of Zanzibar must be prevented as it would bring the re-unification of Muscat and Zanzibar. However, the Government of India would view with satisfaction the succession in Oman of one of the descendants of Sayyid Sa'id b. Sultan, provided he was able to preserve internal order and was capable of conducting the government of the state.⁹⁸ They had also informed the Political Agent at Muscat that the succession must be settled by the chiefs and the people of the country, and that his first objective was to protect British subjects and their interests in times of dispute.⁹⁹

In fact none of this speculation had been concerned with Omani land, and Sultan Turki had resumed his position in strong opposition to the demands of his brother, Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz. With reference to the unity between Muscat and

Zanzibar, the people in Oman certainly did not seem to want this whatever the attitude of the British authorities. As a result of this speculation, Sayyid 'Abd al 'Aziz had emerged very active in presenting himself as the future successor, and took the Sultan's indecisive action in this question as a good sign to renew his rebellion against him.

5.7. Sultan Turki's Dispute 1882

5.7.1. *British help for the Sultan*

At this stage Sultan Turki was in a position to assert his power before his people after the previous unsettled situation, and restore with confidence his authority over the Sultanate. As was so often the case, the situation of the interior and al-Sharqiyyah districts was not in his favour. He tried to use his own friendly relations with the British and their promises of support to strengthen him in his administration. The Government of India were eager to approach the point where they could act promptly in the case of troubles in Oman. As described above, when the cooperation between Shaikh Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali, and Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais was established and the rebels occupied Matrah in June 1877 before reaching Muscat, the guns of H.M.S. *Teazer* prevented them from advancing to Muscat. The British Acting Political Agent there encouraged the Sultan not to accept Ṣaliḥ bin 'Ali's offer of a settlement. This episode was followed by a time of tranquillity in Oman, and the Sultan's position became dependent upon the intervention of his friends, who were ready to offer reasonable support as soon as he requested it.

Lt. Colonel Ross, the British Political Resident in the Gulf, had come to the conclusion that the British interests in Oman would be well served if the tribes of the country learned that the Government of India was determined to protect Sultan Turki's authority whatever the cost. This policy, however, was imposed as a measure of assistance to the Sultan only in order to protect the British strategic and commercial

interests in Muscat and its coastal territories. The Resident in the Gulf always maintained the recommended stance of no change in this policy. The Viceroy himself urged the establishment of a strong relationship with Muscat's present authority, and help was promised to sustain this cooperation. In this development of the British policy towards Muscat, the Sultan's relation with the British Government encouraged the people opposed to his policy to claim that the Sultanate was in practice a British protectorate, and it was probably this belief which gave the 'ulema the excuse to revolt against him time and again. However, the Sultan considered the relations between him and the British as the only way of preventing major troubles in his reign.

The Sultan's position in the country had clearly strengthened, and by the beginning of the year 1882 he was able to exercise his authority directly and through his Walis upon many wilayahs, like Muscat, Matrah, Shinas, Sohar, Nakhal, al-Suwaiq, al-Masna'ah, Barka, Seeb, Qurayyat, Sur, Dhofar, Samail, Sohar, Ebri, Dhank, Izki, Nizwa, and Ja'alan, and peace had been established for the whole country. On 22nd August 1881 the Sultan left Muscat for Gwader for a change of air on board H.M.S. *Woodlark*, and returned to Muscat on September 19th 1881.¹⁰⁰

5.7.2. The proposed coalition against the Sultan

By the beginning of the year 1882, a new and serious dispute was developing in Oman. A formidable coalition between Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz, Shaikh Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali, Ibrahim b. Qais and Ḥamud b. Sa'id al-Jahhafi for the purpose of invading Muscat and Matrah appeared to be a great challenge to British policy in Oman as it was the most effective challenge to the Sultan's authority in the country. The situation was monitored closely by the Political Agent at Muscat, who responded swiftly to any subversive activity.¹⁰¹ On 9th January 1882 the new Political Agent at Muscat, Major Charles Grant, reported to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf on the arrival of news from the interior that Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz, Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais, Shaikh

Ṣaliḥ b. 'Alī al-Ḥarṭhī, and Ḥamūd al-Jaḥḥafī of al-Waḥībāh had come to an agreement to attack Muscat, to raid the Batināh coast, and to attack Sur simultaneously.¹⁰²

This news was soon confirmed by Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz, who on 13th January 1882 sent a letter to the British Political Resident in the Gulf, Lt. Colonel Ross, who was in Muscat. In this letter he criticised the policy of the Sultan, accusing him of carelessness in ruling the country. Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz also complained to Colonel Ross about the Sultan's neglect of his duties towards his subjects, which had resulted in such an excess of violence on the part of the Omani people. The situation in Oman was affected by the absence of the control over crime and the protection of the subjects, which it was mainly the Sultan's duty to maintain for the sake of his citizens.¹⁰³ On the basis of all these allegations, Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz stated that the most intelligent and wise of the chiefs of Oman had induced him to join them in a rebellion against Sultan Sayyid Turki. These chiefs proposed to launch an attack on Muscat immediately. They now insisted upon Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz joining them quickly, while his wish was to do so.¹⁰⁴ Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz considered the Sultan's attitude towards the interior situation a good opportunity to ask the Resident for British approval for this rebellion, or at least that the British abstain from assisting the Sultan against him and his coalition when the attack took place. He confirmed to the British Political Resident that his attack upon Muscat was inevitable, and begged the Resident to tell the British Political Agent at Muscat to take measures for the safety of the British subjects by asking them to leave the town when he and his troops approached Muscat.¹⁰⁵ Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz knew that the British Government would in no way offer him the required assistance against the recognised ruler, but his aim was only to encourage them to abstain from supporting his brother, the Sultan. With regard to this question the British Government confirmed to the Resident in the Gulf that British interests and the safety of their subjects should be the main factors to influence any decision. However, any attack would endanger the present position of

the Sultan in Muscat, and the British authority there would have no choice but to prevent this sort of action.¹⁰⁶ Accordingly the Resident replied to Abdul Aziz as follows:

"You are aware of the relations subsisting between the British Government and His Highness Sayyid Turki, which relations have never been altered since His Highness' accession to the Sultanate. It is therefore almost unnecessary to tell your Highness that any attack on Muscat at present would be quite against the wishes of the British Government".¹⁰⁷

5.7.3. *Ibrahim's attack on al-Masna'ah*

On 11th March 1882, Sayyid Ibrahim bin Qais took al-Masna'ah by surprise, and the Sultan wrote to his brother in Zanzibar, Sayyid Barghash, asking for aid.¹⁰⁸ The Political Agent and Consul-General at Zanzibar, John Kirk, confirmed for the British Government in India that Sultan Turki had written to his brother Barghash giving an account of the disturbances in Oman and the difficulties which faced him, requesting financial aid. Sultan Turki also asked the Sultan of Zanzibar to confiscate the property there of one Juma bin Sa'id al-Maskri, who had been accused of being the ringleader of the antagonistic tribes in Oman. The Sultan sent an agent to collect funds, Ahmad b. Ibrahim, who brought to the Sultan the amount of Rs. 32,000 from his brother in Zanzibar.¹⁰⁹

The British Political Resident in the Gulf, Lt. Colonel Ross, directed the Political Agent at Muscat to send the British gun-boat *Ready* to al-Masna'ah to protect the British subjects and their interests, where they would be able to watch the situation closely.¹¹⁰ On 4th April 1882 the Sultan himself left Muscat for al-Masna'ah on board his steamer *Dar-al-Salaam*, taking with him an 18-pounder siege gun and 150 fighting men. He also sent an equal number over land, passing through Barka and collecting a further force to support the Sultan in his attack from the sea. On 10th April the Sultan managed to regain the port by force, and compelled Sayyid Ibrahim to retreat to al-Rustaq.¹¹¹

5.7.4. Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz and al-Jahhafi's coalition

In June 1882, Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz greatly damaged his reputation by joining an expedition, one of whose leaders was a disreputable trouble-maker, Ḥamud b. Sa'id al-Jahhafi. This movement was directed against Matrah and Muscat, despite the British warning which had been announced by the Political Agent at Muscat, who stated that the attack would be against their wishes.¹¹² At this time the attackers were at al-Watayyah, only a few kilometres from Matrah.¹¹³ While the British attitude in Muscat towards this event was not clear, H.M.S. *Arab* arrived at Matrah on 24th June 1882, and anchored off the town. The appearance of the *Arab* induced the rebels to enter into negotiations with the Sultan, and these negotiations soon took place in Muscat on the 27th and 28th of the same month, which resulted in the Sultan agreeing to pay Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz \$MT 200 and Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali \$MT 50 as a monthly pension, provided the rebels agreed to leave Muscat immediately.¹¹⁴

Accordingly, Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz wrote to the Political Resident in the Gulf, Lt. Colonel Ross, informing him of his recent movements with al-Jahhafi against Matrah and Muscat, and stating that peace and friendly relations with the Sultan had been restored.¹¹⁵ Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz was not in complete conformity with Sultan Sayyid Turki, as he still thought that the situation in the country desperately needed an effective settlement, and he offered his efforts to mediate in the troubles between the Sultan and those who had opposed him.¹¹⁶ The British Resident replied to him expressing appreciation of his offer, and confirmed for him that the British Government's only desire was the maintenance of the existing dynasty, adding that the British Government were linked with the Sultan Turki by a friendly alliance system.¹¹⁷

Therefore, Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz understood that armed opposition to the Sultan would certainly be displeasing to the British Government, whereas sincere

support for his Government would be looked upon favourably. However, Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz's settlement with the Sultan did not last very long: Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz breached his assurances with the Sultan by entering into a new intrigue against his brother with Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali al-Ḥarṭhi in October the following year, which affirmed his enmity to Sultan Turki.

5.7.5. *The Attack on Muscat of 1883*

During the first half of 1883, Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali was very active in preparing himself for a challenging task, collecting his forces to attack Muscat again to depose Sultan Turki from power. In fact, however, Ṣaliḥ had lost Sayyid Ibrahim's support at that time, because the latter had already resumed friendly relations with the Sultan after his last raid on al-Masan'ah in the spring of 1882, and had promised to abandon the antagonism in April 1883 with the acceptance of \$MT 100 as a monthly pension.¹¹⁸ Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz joined Shaikh Ṣaliḥ in his preparation for this operation against Muscat, ignoring all his assurances to the Sultan. In October 1883, Ṣaliḥ led the Hinawi faction of the Sharqiyyah tribes, such as al-Ḥirṭh, al-Ḥabūs, and al-Ḥajriyyin, through Wadi al-'Akk to launch his attack on Muscat.¹¹⁹ When they reached Surūr in Wadi al-'Akk about 80 kilometres from Muscat, Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz wrote a letter on 19th October to the Political Agent at Muscat, in which he informed him of an impending attack on Muscat, requesting the Agent to evacuate the British subjects from the disputed area.¹²⁰

Accordingly, the Sultan concentrated his defence on Muscat with 500 men, leaving Matrah virtually unprotected.¹²¹ The discussion of the matter between the Political Agent and the British Political Resident in the Gulf resulted in agreement to provide armed support to the Sultan and to prevent the rebels advancing towards Muscat. On 21st October 1883 the rebels were in Ruwi, just a few kilometres out of Matrah, which came under their control on the following day, and was chosen as their

base for the next attack against the capital of Oman.¹²² Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz was now considered as the main figure in this plot confronting Muscat. On 23rd October, on a dark night, Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz mounted an attack via al-Wadi al-Kabeer about 6 kilometres from Muscat. Sultan Turki demonstrated his ability to overcome the crisis, and strengthened his position, when he displayed energy and skill in conducting Muscat's defence. However, Muscat was not yet out of danger. On the same day the Sultan received about 70 fighting men of Janabah from Sur on board his steamer *Dar al-Salaam* to reinforce his garrison at Muscat.¹²³ The British promise of support to the Sultan had been confirmed by the arrival of H.M.S. *Philomel*, and she fired on the rebels when the Sultan became unable to close the pass to Muscat via al-Wadi al-Kabeer. The rebels were thereby prevented from advancing towards Muscat.¹²⁴ The Sultan made another request to the Political Agent for more shots to be fired to keep the rebels at a reasonable distance from Muscat, and the request was granted. However, the rebels' attempts to break the Sultan's defence continued for two more days; it appeared impossible for the rebels to win after the Sultan received further support of about 700 men from various places in Oman, and while the shots from the gun-boat *Philomel* continued to fire.¹²⁵

On 26th October, Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz and Shaikh Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali retreated to al-Sharqiyyah district having gained no advantage. Afterwards, the Sultan found that the forces which had gathered for his support had increased to about 3000 fighting men.¹²⁶ So he was encouraged to follow the retreating rebels, and to punish those tribes who had given the leaders their support. The Sultan despatched his son Sayyid Faisal, leading about 1700 men, to Samāil, where he soon gained the tribes' submission to his father's authority.¹²⁷ Sultan Turki's position was now ostensibly secure and tranquil, though the troubles in the interior and the threats to his sovereignty remained active for the rest of his time in power. The Batinah coast,

stood as another obstacle to his stability from time to time; however, the Sultan always controlled the situation in the country because of his skilful policy and British support.

5.8. Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz's attitude towards the Sultan 1885-88

Relations between Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz and his brother Sayyid Turki from then onwards had a direct effect on the Sultan's position and continued to create an unsettled situation, though the Sultan urged him strongly to be on good terms. This matter was a power struggle over who had the right to rule the country, and directly linked to this was the position of the tribes in Oman involved in the disagreement between them. Despite British mediation to solve the matter, Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz always rejected any suggestion which could help to resolve the difficulties; this trouble lasted for the whole of Sayyid Turki's time in power, and continued later on between Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz and Sultan Faisal up until Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz death.

In January 1885 Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz wrote to the Political Agent at Muscat Lt. Colonel Miles, seeking another settlement to his troubles with his brother the Sultan, and requesting the Agent's good offices in effecting a reconciliation with Sayyid Turki.¹²⁸ The Sultan agreed to take part in this negotiation, and this time promised to pay his brother Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz the previous allowance of \$MT 500 as a monthly pension, on condition that Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz should reside in India. However, this negotiation ended unsuccessfully when Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz refused the Sultan's suggestions, and the Agent showed his regret that an amicable arrangement had not been achieved.¹²⁹ Accordingly Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz stayed in al-Sharqiyyah district planning another aggressive move against Muscat with Shaikh Ṣāliḥ b. 'Alī. In the summer of that year, the British authorities in the Gulf communicated this information to the Government of India, while the Political Resident in the Gulf suggested that British policy in Oman should work at a more obvious level and offer a more definite process for supporting the Sultan, though it

would not need to be extended to his sons or successors.¹³⁰ A few months later Colonel Ross, the Resident in the Gulf, informed the Government of India of some news he had just received from Muscat about Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz, in which he mentioned his determination to renew his attempt to raise a rebellion and to attack Muscat. The Resident added that, in view of the significant commercial interests in Oman, the generally friendly relations existing between the British Government and the Sultan of Muscat, and the active support which had been offered to him on many different occasions by this Government, the Government of India should accept these arguments for providing the British support to the Sultan of Oman and his country.¹³¹ He also clearly mentioned that Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz and the other hostile leaders should be informed that even in the event of their gaining possession of Muscat or Matrah, they would be expelled by British Government forces and the Sultan would be restored to power.¹³² He was of the opinion that such strong action by them in Muscat to secure the Sultan's position would put an end to the repeated quarrels and threats which the Sultan had suffered repeatedly over a short period.¹³³

The Government of India described the Political Resident's suggestions in their reply to him as a change of policy, which might imply a commitment to support by force of arms a ruler who was already troubled with a number of conflicts.¹³⁴ So they did not recommend the policy or any rapid change in it without careful consideration, at least for the time being. The Secretary to the Government of India stated in addition to this that British policy in Oman should be to abstain from entanglement in the dynastic disputes.¹³⁵ The British feared that this sort of policy might imply upholding of the rights of the Sultan who probably could not have had his position in power without their support. However, the Government of India promised further consideration of this question which might put them under an obligation to support Sultan Turki during his lifetime. This in turn might create embarrassment

after his death, when this support would be claimed directly by his son or successor.¹³⁶

Colonel Ross expressed his views on the matter more precisely when he mentioned that British policy in Oman should be also definite, consistent and effective. He made it clear that the adoption of the suggested policy in Oman would not entail further accountability beyond that which had been assumed during the time of the attack on Muscat, but on the contrary tended more to the avoidance of an embarrassing situation there.¹³⁷ The Resident was very close to the major events in Oman, and he contemplated that to lay down a clear decision for a definite policy might reduce the internal trouble in the country. He based his views upon the following:

"Firstly: that the normal and permanent policy of Government towards Muscat should be, as heretofore, non-interference in dynastic struggles and internal Administration, and avoidance of employment of armed force.

Secondly: that when special circumstances compel recourse to armed intervention either to support the Muscat Government or protect British interests, such intervention should be thorough. It should be understood that such action has in reserve to back it the whole power of the Government and that any failure could be temporary, and would be promptly repaired.

Thirdly: that the case of Sayyid Turki is exceptional and that it is impossible with credit, and consequently with expediency, to refuse him armed support when he solicits".¹³⁸

Colonel Ross had reached the conclusion that when the tribes of the interior of Oman definitely knew that the British Government would never leave the Sultan of Muscat in any difficulties, without determined support from the sea, they would do well to consider the outcome of any attempt against Muscat or its territories. Ross had recommended no real change in the British policy towards Muscat, but simply supported the friendly relations that linked them with the Sultan of Oman and had been accepted and practised by the two governments. The Resident made it clear that Royal Navy vessels had been requested on many different occasions to support the Sultan, and had been authorised by the British Government to take that action against his rivals. Withholding this support from him in future would undoubtedly result in

serious damage to British prestige in Oman. So as an exceptional measure, Sayyid Turki should receive active assistance, and any refusal of this policy at the present time would be regarded by the Sultan as a policy of tergiversation.¹³⁹ In fact Sultan Turki's policies from the beginning of his time in power had depended upon British support, no matter whether this assistance was confirmed to him or not, and he had never been left neglected, or without instant consideration in the course of hostilities against Muscat.

With reference to the same issue, the Government of India also requested the Political Agent at Muscat, S. B. Miles, to submit his views on the matter. So he wrote on 17th October 1885 to Colonel Ross saying that his views were in agreement with the Political Resident in the Gulf.¹⁴⁰ He added that in the present situation the Sultan could not maintain his position in Muscat without proper support from the Government of India. The Agent linked this situation of friendly relations with Sultan Turki and the aid requested from the British. It had been affirmed during the reign of his father Sayyid Sa'id b. Sultan the great, who enjoyed British armed support and the intervention of the Indian Navy in times of troubles, and the British should consider Sayyid Turki's need for support to be similar to that his father needed and received.¹⁴¹

The question was discussed extensively in the Foreign Department, but official opinion was undecided on any action that would help them to impose a measure of control on the Government's liberty in adopting this policy.¹⁴² On 9th February 1886 the Government of India wrote to the Political Resident concerning their confidence in Colonel Ross's knowledge of the situation in Muscat and informed him of their decision: approval for his recommendation on this issue. They authorised him to declare to the Sultan and the whole country that the British Government intended to assist Sultan Turki in any aggression from now on, and that this policy would be continued during his time in power.¹⁴³ The Sultan was also informed however, that the active support by the Government of India would not be necessarily granted or

presumed to his children, heirs or successors, and that the British policy towards Muscat would be one of non-intervention in dynastic disputes or the internal administration.¹⁴⁴ In a subsequent communication between the Government of India and the authority in the Gulf, both confirmed that their support to the Sultan would only be continued as long as Sayyid Turki conducted his Government in a manner conducive to British Government policy.¹⁴⁵

Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz was taking resolute action to depose his brother Sultan Turki, and had been moving from one place to another to achieve his object. Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz's activities were extended to include some places outside Oman when he contacted the shaikhs of the Trucial Coast to ask for their support against Sultan Turki.

The British Political Resident in the Gulf had already learned that Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz had written to the Shaikh of Dubai to urge him to rise with him in opposition to Sayyid Turki. Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz promised to give the Shaikh great support, with all his men marching towards the Batinah coast and Sohar to make an attack on the dominions of the Sultan in order to create troubles in that part of his possession. The delegation from al-Sharqiyyah had certainly arrived in Dubai to discuss the situation more closely with the Shaikh.¹⁴⁶ In reply to these requests the Shaikh of Dubai wrote to the Sultan of Muscat, offering his own mediation in the quarrel, in order to establish the two brothers' relationship.¹⁴⁷ However, the Shaikh of Dubai's offer was rejected by the Sultan, who showed his displeasure at Zaid's attitude towards this matter in a written letter to him. Despite this the shaikh maintained a friendly attitude towards Sultan Sayyid Turki, and promised to take no further action in favour of Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz in future.¹⁴⁸

When Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz lost the prospect of support from the Shaikh of Dubai, he took advantage of the Bani Battash rebellion against the Sultan's authority in Qurayyat during the month of September 1886.¹⁴⁹ In early October 1886 he was in

al-Ḥajer, a few kilometres from Muscat, with 200 men, mainly Ḥabūs, in order to attack Muscat. When the news reached the Sultan of Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz's most recent hostilities, he despatched a force of 1200 men with one field-gun under the command of Badr b. Saif and his sons to the area, which been evacuated on Saif's arrival.¹⁵⁰ The rebels of Bani Battash were destroyed and eventually submitted to the Sultan's authority with an obligation of paying a fine of \$MT 10,000. The dispute was finally concluded in November 1886.¹⁵¹

As a result of these challenges to the Sultan's authority, and thinking of the future defence of Muscat, the Sultan decided in June 1887 that his guns in the forts of al-Jalali and al-Mairani were clearly inadequate for the required defence of Muscat if attacked. The Sultan therefore requested the Government of India to supply him with 12 pounder guns which he would pay for. The Government of India authorised the supply on the recommendation of the British Political Resident in the Gulf in a letter to the Political Resident in the Gulf on 11th August 1887.¹⁵²

5.9. Shaikh Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali's and Sayyid Ibrahim's intrigue in 1887

During this year the situation in Oman was leading up to another dispute, when the tribes of al-Sharqiyyah were gathered, as before, under the command of Shaikh Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali. They tried to establish a general coalition of all the Hinawi tribes and Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz in order to overthrow the Sultan's regime in Oman.¹⁵³ On July 1st 1887, Lt. Colonel E. Mockler, who had replaced S. B. Miles as Political Agent at Muscat on 16th April, reported that news of Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais's new attempt to attack the Batinah coast had reached Muscat. Mockler reported accordingly that he was in league with the Bani Ghafir Hinawi faction and other tribes, attempting to obtain possession of al-'Awabi. Mockler also wrote that the Sultan was urged by the people of the Batinah to take swift action against this intrigue, with their support.¹⁵⁴ However the Sultan took no effective steps to prevent Sayyid Ibrahim from carrying

out his threat, taking the fort of al-Suwaiq by surprise on the night of 1st July 1887, and beginning to threaten to attack al-Masan'ah in his next move. The Sultan then sent his force with his three sons and the Commander Badr b. Saif. However, he felt that this operation would not be sufficient to restore the situation to normal and to drive Sayyid Ibrahim out of his position without effective support from his British allies.¹⁵⁵ Interestingly, Sayyid Ibrahim had not been informed that practical support had always been granted to the Sultan in the course of trouble by the British. The Political Resident, Colonel Ross, arrived in Muscat on 9th July 1887, and shortly afterwards proceeded to al-Suwaiq with Lt. Colonel E. Mockler on board H.M.S. *Lawrence* to offer the Sultan the necessary support and impose the unconditional surrender of Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais.¹⁵⁶

Sayyid Ibrahim found himself in a difficult situation and agreed to evacuate the town and its fort peacefully and unconditionally. He then retreated to his base in al-Rustaq. On 12th July al-Suwaiq was again in the Sultan's possession and garrisoned by his troops.¹⁵⁷ The Government of India fully supported the action of the British Political Resident. As a consequence of this success of the Sultan in al-Suwaiq, the coalition plan for a general Hinawi rebellion against the Sultan failed.¹⁵⁸ On 13th November 1887, the Sultan left for Gwader for a short rest, and returned on 2nd December 1887.¹⁵⁹

With the suppression of all movements against the Sultan, the situation in Oman became more stable. The Sultan established control all over the country from north to south, without any challenge to his authority. His sons were very active in consolidating his power and led many successful campaigns which brought down many of the hostile elements which threatened the Sultan during his reign. During this period it appears that the Sultan's health was unstable and his illness became serious again. His brother Sultan Barghash of Zanzibar visited him at Muscat on his steamer *Nyanza* on 4th March 1888.¹⁶⁰ Sayyid Barghash himself was suffering from ill-

health, and had been recommended to bathe in the hot spring at Ghala near Bowsher 27 kilometres out of Muscat for the sake of his health.

During that short visit Sayyid Barghash presented his brother Sayyid Turki with a present of Rs 50,000 before he went back to Zanzibar on 17th March 1888.¹⁶¹ In May, Sultan Turki's health deteriorated rapidly, and he became critically ill on the 15th; the question of the sultanate rose again. The Sultan had been visited by the British Resident, Colonel Ross, who arrived in Muscat on board H.M.S. *Kingfisher* and remained there for two days before proceeding to Bushire.¹⁶² The Sultan did not live long after the departure of the British Resident, dying on 3rd June 1888.

This life had been a full of events and adventure; having regained power for his line of the dynasty, but also suffered greatly from the deportation to India and Bandar Abbas. However, he also gained great satisfaction from his attempts to establish a central and stable Government as far as circumstances would allow, whilst preventing injury to the dignity or the self-respect of the tribal shaikhs or the people of the country as a whole. the Sultan's death led to a real disaster and chaos in the country.

Sayyid Faisal, the second and the most active of his sons, immediately took over the leadership of the country from his father, and took it with the complete agreement of the British Authorities, though his official recognition was not to be granted until February 1890.¹⁶³ Despite Sultan Turki's success in creating and maintaining a relatively stable state during his own lifetime, this situation did not continue after his death, as the country descended into chaos over the issue of the succession-a clear failure on the part of Sultan Turki in establishing long-term peace and stability for Oman.

¹ R. O. vol. ii, *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1872-1892*, pp. 75-77.

² R. O. vol. ii, *ibid.* p.78.

³ Kumar, R., *India and the Persian Gulf Region 1858-1907*, London; 1965, p. 68.

⁴ R. O. vol. ii, *Precis of Muscat Affairs*, p.78.

⁵ R. O. vol. ii, *ibid.* p. 82.

⁶ R. O. Vol. ii. *ibid.* p. 82.

⁷ *Report of the Administration of the Persian Gulf Political Residency and Muscat Political Agency for the year 1875-76*, vol. i, 1873-1879, p. 74.

⁸ R. O. vol. ii, *ibid.* p. 84.

⁹ R. O. vol. ii, *ibid.* p. 84.

¹⁰ *Report of the Administration of the Persian Gulf Political Residency... for the year 1875-76*, vol. i, p. 74.

¹¹ R. O. vol. ii, p. 84.

¹² *Ibid.* pp. 84-86.

¹³ I.O. R. R/15/6/8. *Report from Lt. Col. Miles, the Political Agent and Consul at Muscat to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf and Consul for Fars, Lt. Col. Ross.* Dated Muscat, 14th May 1875.

¹⁴ The apparent cause for this dispute was certain claims for money and provisions which had been disregarded and left unsatisfied by the Sultan. The dissatisfaction was enough to reach the stage where the Bani Bū Hasan put themselves in open opposition to the Sultan's policy and threatened to plunder the towns of Muscat and Matrah. The troubles were sufficient to make the Sultan leave his palace on the night of 13th May 1875, hiding himself on a merchant vessel in the harbour of Muscat. The Sultan returned to the palace when 'Abd al-'Aziz informed him about the settlement in which the Sultan's Government had agreed to their demands and the payment of the arrears due to the rebels, which cost the Sultan about \$MT 1700. For more information see the *Report of the Administration of the Persian Gulf Political Residency... for the year 1875-76*, vol. i, p. 74; *R. O.* vol. ii, pp. 106-109; Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 497.

¹⁵ I. O. R. R/15/6/8. *Letter from His Highness the Sultan of Muscat to the Political Agent at Muscat, Lt. Col. Miles.* Dated Muscat, 22nd Jumada al-Akhar, 1292 (26th July 1875).

The Agreement which the Sultan had agreed with the Hinawi tribes followed the trouble regarding the fort's garrisons; the Sultan had relinquished to them the following points:

i. That he should admit the following number of the Hinawis, as his paid garrisons in the towns of Muscat and Matrah: 50 men from al-Wahibah, 50 men from Bani Bū Hasan, and 50 men from al-Hajriyyin.

ii. That the Sultan's Wali in Samāil fort, Muhammad b. Sinān of the Ghafiri garrison should be discharged, and a Baluchi garrison should take their place.

iii. That the remainder of the Wahhabi guards in Muscat fort should be all dismissed.

iv. That the Bani Hadram should no longer remain as the garrison of Matrah's gates.

v. That 100 men should be retained at Muscat as an escort for Sayyid Abd al-'Aziz, when he proceeded towards the interior to settle internal disputes. See I. O. R. R/15/6/8. *Letter from His Highness the Sultan of Muscat Sayyid Turki b. Sa'id to Sayyid Abd al-'Aziz*. Dated Muscat, 20th Jumada al-Akhar, 1292 (24th July 1875); See also the R. O. vol. ii, pp. 113-14.

¹⁶ I. O. R. R/15/6/8. *Letters from His Highness Sultan Turki b. Said to the Political Agent at Muscat Lt. Col. Miles*. Dated Muscat, Jumada al-Awwal, 1292.

¹⁷ I. O. R. R/15/6/8. *A translation of a copy of the arrangement between Sultan Turki and Sayyid Abd al-'Aziz*.

¹⁸ Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 498.

¹⁹ I. O. R. R/15/6/8/ *Letter from His Highness Sayyid Turki b. Said Sultan of Muscat, to Lt. Col., S. B. Miles, H.B.M. Political Agent and Consul Muscat*. Dated Muscat 12th Rajab, 1292 (14th August 1875).

²⁰ I. O. R. R/15/6/8. See the same letter.

²¹ I. O. R. R/15/6/8. *Letter from H. H. Sultan Turki b. Said Sultan of Muscat to Lt. Col. S. B. Miles, H.B.M. Political Agent and Consul Muscat*. Dated Muscat, 13th Rajab, 1292 (15th August 1875).

²² I. O. R. R/15/6/8. See the same letter.

²³ *Report of the Administration of the Persian Gulf Political Residency and Muscat Political Agency for the year 1875-76*. vol. i, p. 75.

²⁴ R. O. vol. ii. *Precis of Muscat affairs 1872-92*, pp. 118-119.

²⁵ Lorimer, 1915, vol. i. p. 498.

²⁶ Ibid. p. 498.

²⁷ R. O. vol. ii, p. 119.

²⁸ Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 502.

²⁹ *Report of the Administration of the Persian Gulf Political Residency and Muscat Political Agency for the year 1875-76*, vol. i, p. 75. See also Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 502.

³⁰ *Report of the Administration of the Persian Gulf Political Residency...for the year 1875-76*, vol. i, p. 75.

³¹ R. O. vol. ii, p. 120.

³² Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 503.

³³ R. O. vol. ii, p. 123. Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 503.

³⁴ R. O. vol. ii, pp. 122-23; and Lorimer, 1915, p. 503.

³⁵ *Report on the Administration of the Persian Gulf Residency... for the year 1875-76*, vol. i. pp. 123-124.

³⁶ Ibid. p. 76.

³⁷ R. O. vol. ii. p. 24; Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 503.

³⁸ *Report of the Administration of the Persian Gulf Political Residency and Muscat Political Agency for the year 1875-76*, vol. i, p. 76.

³⁹ I. O. R. R/15/6/8. *Letter from His Highness Sultan Turki bin Said to the Political Agent at Muscat Lt. Col. S. B. Miles*. Dated 14th Dhu'l-Qadah, 1292 (15th December 1875).

⁴⁰ I. O. R. R/15/6/8. See the same letter.

⁴¹ I. O. R. R/15/6/8. *Letter from H. H. Sultan Turki bin Said to the Political Agent at Muscat Lt. Col. S. B. Miles*. Dated 17th Dhu'l-Qadah, 1292 (18th December, 1875).

⁴² R. O. vol. ii, *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1872-1892*, p. 128.

⁴³ *Report on the Administration of the Persian Gulf Political Residency and Muscat Political Agency for the year 1875-76*, vol. i, p. 76.

⁴⁴ R. O. vol. ii, p. 128.

⁴⁵ I. O. R. R/15/6/8. *Letter from H. H. Sayyid Turki b. Said the Sultan of Muscat to the British Political Agent at Muscat, Lt. Col. Miles*. Dated Muscat, 2th Dhu'l-Qadah, 1292 (19th December 1875).

⁴⁶ I. O. R. R/15/6/8. See the same letter.

⁴⁷ *Report of the Administration of the Persian Gulf Political Residency and Muscat Political Agent for the year 1875-76*, vol. i, p. 76.

⁴⁸ I. O. R. R/15/6/8. *Telegram from the British Political Resident in the Persian Gulf & Consul for Fars, to the Secretary to the Government of India.* Dated 30th December 1875.

⁴⁹ R. O. vol. ii, *Precis of Muscat Affairs*, p. 130.

⁵⁰ I. O. R. R/15/6/8. *Letter from Lt. Col. Ross, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf & the Consul for Fars, to His Highness Sayyid Turki b. Said Sultan of Muscat.* Dated 31st December 1875.

⁵¹ R. O. vol. ii, p. 130.

⁵² Ibid. pp. 130-31

⁵³ Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 505

⁵⁴ al-Jahhafi had openly acted against the Sultan's authority specially during the Sultan's residency at Gwader. Soon after the settlement achieved by the Sultan with his opponents after his return from Gwader, and the strengthening of his position on the throne of the country, he arrested al-Jahhafi with two other disaffected Bedouin Shaikhs, 'Amir b. Sālim and Rashid b. Juma, of Bani Bū Hasan on 7th April 1876. However, those prisoners were released on July 2nd 1876, by the request of Shaikh Ṣaliḥ bin 'Ali al-Harṭhi, who had the Sultan's respect, though he was now gathering al-Sharqiyyah tribes under his order to rise against the Sultan's authority. See R. O. vol. ii, pp. 133-34; al-Salimi, 1978, vol. ii, p. 235; Also Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 505.

⁵⁵ al-Salimi, 1978, vol. ii, p. 235.

⁵⁶ *Report of the Administration on the Persian Gulf Political Residency and Muscat Political Agency for the year 1876-77*, vol. i, p. 78.

⁵⁷ Lt. Col. Miles visited Nakhal, Barka, al-Rustaq, al-'Awabi, Nizwa, Izki, and Wadi Tanuf in al-Jabal al-Akhdar, and Wadi al-Maawel, etc., during his journey to the interior in the middle of 1876. He stated that the tribes of all these towns had shown a reasonable respect and friendly reaction to his visit, but the trouble of those tribes of al-Ma'awel with the Sultan had not been yet settled. Nakhal was indebted to the courtesy of one of the Sultan's officials, but the interior tribes of al-Jabal al-Akhdar, were a constant source of trouble, not with the Sultan, but between the Hinawi and the Ghafiri on holding the forts of the district. It was more noticeable between the Bani Reyam of al-Jabal al-Akhdar the Ghafiri faction, and the Bani Ruwahah, the Hinawi faction, in the district. In fact the settlement of this dispute was achieved at last by the Sultan in his favour, when he agreed to pacify the two tribes by producing a fine resolution to the cause of the trouble. See Miles, S. B. "Across the Green-Mountain of Oman", *Geographical Journal*, vol. xviii, no. 5 (1901), p. 465 and pp. 472-73.

⁵⁸ R. O. vol. ii, *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1872-92*, p. 137.

⁵⁹ R. O. ibid, Pp. 138-39.

⁶⁰ The Sultan used to pay al-Harthi \$MT 100 a month, but he felt that, this sum would not be sufficient for his expenditure in the future, and he asked the Sultan to increase his pay. No settlement was reached between them on this issue. See the R. O. vol. ii, p. 146.

⁶¹ Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 506.

⁶² On June 6th 1877, the Political Agent at Muscat Lt. Col. S. B. Miles left Muscat for home on six months furlough, and was succeeded by Mr. P. J. Robertson, H. M. Consul at Basra, who took charge of the Muscat Agency on 7th June 1877, till Miles's return on 4th January 1878. See *Report of the Administration of the Persian Gulf Political Residency and Muscat Political Agency for the year 1877-78*, vol. i, p. 127.

⁶³ *Report of the Administration of the Persian Gulf...for the year 1877-78*, vol. i, p. 127; R. O. vol. ii, pp. 147-48; Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, pp. 505-506.

⁶⁴ Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 506; R. O. vol. ii, p. 148.

⁶⁵ Lorimer, *ibid.* p. 506.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.* p. 506.

⁶⁷ *Report of the Administration of the Persian Gulf Residency and Muscat Political Agency for the year 1877-78*, vol. i, p. 128; R. O. vol. ii, p. 154, *passim*.

⁶⁸ R. O. vol. ii, p. 154; *Report of the Administration of the Persian Gulf...for the year 1877-78*, vol. i, p. 128.

⁶⁹ I. O. R. R/15/6/10. *Letter from Sayyid Abd al-'Aziz bin Sa'id to Shaikh Hamad b. Sa'id al-Barwani*. Dated Ja'alan, 8 Dhu'l Hijjah, 1293 (14 December 1877).

⁷⁰ I. O. R. R/15/6/10. *Letter from the British Political Agent and Consul at Muscat S. B. Miles to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, and the Consul for Fars Lt. Col. Edward Ross*. Dated Muscat, 14th January 1878.

⁷¹ I. O. R. R/15/6/10. See the same letter.

⁷² I. O. R. R/15/6/10. See the same letter

⁷³ I. O. R. R/15/6/10. *Letter from Lt. Col. S. B. Miles, the Political Agent at Muscat, to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf and the British Consul for Fars Lt. Col. E. Ross*. Dated Muscat, 19th February 1878.

⁷⁴ I. O. R. R/15/6/10. *Letter from Lt. Col. S. B. Miles the Political Agent and Consul at Muscat, to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, and the British Consul for Fars, Lt. Col. E. Ross*. Dated Muscat, 20th February, 1878.

⁷⁵ R. O. vol. ii, *Precis of Muscat Affairs*, pp. 161-63.

⁷⁶ R. O. *ibid.* pp.161-63.

⁷⁷ The Sultan a short time before had requested his brother in Zanzibar to look out for a small steamer in Bombay, and to let him know if there was any on the market to be purchased. Sultan Turki was desperately in need of one of this sort of vessel in his service because by the end of 1877 he had sold his only steamer the *Rahmani* for Rs. 10,000 in Bombay and his coast was unguarded. One was found in India for sale for Rs. 1,500, but was old and in need of repair. The Sultan felt that this was not the one which he looking for, and finally the *Dar-al-Salaam* was presented to Muscat on 29th May 1878. I. O. R. R. R/15/6/10. *Letter from Lt. Col. S. B. Miles to the Political Agent in the Persian Gulf and the Consul for Fars E. Ross.* Dated Muscat, 30th May, 1878. See also R.O. vol. ii, p. 130.

⁷⁸ R.O. vol. ii, *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1872-92*, p. 165.

⁷⁹ *Report of the Administration of the Persian Gulf Political Residency and Muscat Political Agency for the year 1878-79*, vol. i, p. 124.

⁸⁰ I. O. R. R/15/6/11. *Letter from H. H. Sayyid Turki b. Said Sultan of Muscat to Major C. B. Euan Smith, the Political Agent at Muscat.* Dated Muscat, 1st Dhu'l Qa'dah, 1296 (18th October 1879).

⁸¹ R. O. vol. ii, *Precis of Muscat Affairs*, p. 169.

⁸² I. O. R. R/15/6/11. *Letter from Lt. Col. E. C. Ross, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, to Major C. B. Euan Smith, Political Agent at Muscat.* Dated Bushire, 31st October 1879.

⁸³ I. O. R. R/15/6/11. *Letter from the Under Secretary to the Government of India to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf.* Dated 26th November 1879.

⁸⁴ *Report of the Administration of the Persian Gulf Political Residency and Muscat Political Agency for the year 1880-81*, vol. ii, p. 28. *Passim* the R. O. vol. ii, p. 175, *passim*.

⁸⁵ *Report of the Administration of the Persian Gulf Political Residency and Muscat...for the year 1880-81*, vol. ii, pp. 27-28.

⁸⁶ I.O. R. R/15/6/13. *Letter from Sayyid Faisal b. Turki to His Highness Sultan Turki b. Said.* Dated Nizwa, 21 Dhu'l Hijjah, 1297 (20th November 1880).

⁸⁷ I. O. R. R/15/6/13. *Letter from Sayyid Faisal b. Turki to His Highness Sultan Turki b. Said.* Dated Nizwa, 16th Muharram 1298 (December, 1880).

⁸⁸ Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 512.

⁸⁹ *Report of the Administration of the Persian Gulf Political Residency and Muscat Political Agency for the year 1880-1881*, vol. ii, pp. 175-77; Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 2693.

⁹⁰ *Report of the Administration of the Persian Gulf Political Residency and Muscat Political agency for the year 1880-1881*, vol. ii, pp. 175-77; Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 2693.

⁹¹ I. O. R. R/15/6/13. *Letter from the Viceroy Governor-General of India, Lytton to His Highness the Sultan of Muscat*. Dated Simla, 8th June 1880.

⁹² I. O. R. R/15/6/13. *Letter from the Viceroy General-Governor of India, G. F. Ripon, to His Highness the Sultan of Muscat*. Dated Simla, 12th July 1880.

⁹³ R. O. vol. ii, p. 177.

⁹⁴ I. O. R. R/15/6/143. *Letter from the British Political Resident in the Persian Gulf to the Secretary to the Government of India*. Dated Bushire, 8th April 1881.

⁹⁵ I. O. R. R/15/6/143. *Report from the Secretary to the Government of India to the British Political Resident in the Persian Gulf*. Dated Simla, 25th June 1881.

⁹⁶ I. O. R. R/15/6/143. See the same Report.

⁹⁷ I. O. R. R/15/6/143. See the Same Report.

⁹⁸ I. O. R. R/15/6/143. Ibid.

⁹⁹ I. O. R. R/15/6/143. Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ For more information see the R. O. Vol. ii. p. 181. Also the *Report of the Administration of the Persian Gulf Political Residency and Muscat Political Agency for the Year 1881-82*, vol. ii, p. 14.

¹⁰¹ *Report of the Administration of the Persian Gulf Political Residency and Muscat Political Agency for the year 1881-82*, vol. ii, p. 15.

¹⁰² R. O. vol. ii, *Precis of Muscat Affairs 1872-92*, p. 181; Miles, S. B., "On the border of the Great Desert: a Journey in Oman", *The Geographical Journal*, vol. xxxvii, no. 4 (October, 1910), pp. 413-417.

¹⁰³ I. O. R. R/15/6/15. *Letter from Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz b. Sa'id to Lt. Col. Ross the British Political Resident and Consul-General in the Persian Gulf*. Dated, 22nd Safar 1299 (13th January, 1882).

¹⁰⁴ I. O. R. R/15/6/15. See the same letter.

¹⁰⁵ I. O. R. R/15/6/15. See the same letter.

¹⁰⁶ R. O. vol. ii, *Precis of Muscat Affairs*, pp. 180-82.

¹⁰⁷ I. O. R. R/15/6/15. *Letter from the British Political Resident and Consul for Fars to H.H. Sayyid Abd al-'Aziz b. Sa'id*. Dated Muscat, 11th Rabe'e al-Thani, 1299 (2nd March 1882).

¹⁰⁸ R. O. vol. ii, *Precis of Muscat Affairs*, p. 182; See also Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 508.

¹⁰⁹ I. O. R. R/15/6/14. *Letter from John Kirk, Agent and Consul-General at Zanzibar to the Secretary to the Government of India*. Letters from Zanzibar, Number. 32. of 1883; R. O. vol. ii, pp. 184-85.

¹¹⁰ R. O. vol. ii, *Precis of Muscat Affairs*, p. 182.

¹¹¹ Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 508.

¹¹² R. O. vol. ii, p. 182.

¹¹³ Lorimer, 1915, vol. i. p. 508.

¹¹⁴ R. O. vol. ii, *Precis of Muscat Affairs*, pp. 182-83.

¹¹⁵ I. O. R. R/15/6/15. *Letter from Sayyid Abd al-'Aziz b. Sa'id to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, Lt. Col. E. Ross*. Dated 7th Ramadan 1299 (23rd July 1882).

¹¹⁶ I. O. R. R/15/6/15. See the same letter.

¹¹⁷ I. O. R. R/15/6/15. *Letter from the British Political Resident in the Persian Gulf and Consul for Fars, E. Ross to His Highness Sayyid Abdul Aziz b. Said*. Dated Bushire, 18th August 1882 (3rd Shawwal, 1299).

¹¹⁸ R. O. vol. ii, p. 184.

¹¹⁹ Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, pp. 508-09; Landen, 1967, pp. 337-38.

¹²⁰ R. O. vol. ii, p. 187. Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 509.

¹²¹ R. O. vol. ii, p. 187.

¹²² Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 509.

¹²³ Ibid. pp. 509-10.

¹²⁴ R. O. vol. ii, *Precis of Muscat Affairs*, p. 187; Lorimer, 1915, p. 510; Landen, 1967, pp. 335-38.

¹²⁵ R. O. vol. ii, pp. 187-88; Lorimer, vol. i, 1915, p. 510.

¹²⁶ Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 510.

¹²⁷ R. O. vol. ii, *Precis of Muscat Affairs*, p. 190. Landen, 1967, p. 338.

¹²⁸ I. O. R. R/15/6/17. *Letter from the Political Agent and Consul at Muscat, Lt., Col. S. B. Miles to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf and General-Consul for Fars, Lt. Col. E. Ross*. Dated Muscat, 18th January 1885.

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- 129 I. O. R. R/15/6/17. See the same letter.
- 130 I. O. R. R/15/6/17. See the same letter.
- 131 I. O. R. R/15/6/17. *Letter from Col. E.C. Ross, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, and Her Majesty's Consul-General for Fars, to H. M. Durand, Esq., Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign Dept., Simla. Dated Bushire, 12th August 1885.*
- 132 I. O. R. R/15/6/ 17. See the same letter.
- 133 I. O. R. R/15/6/17. See the same letter.
- 134 I. O. R. R/15/6/17. *Letter from the Secretary to the Government of India, Foreign Dept., to the PRPG and the Consul-General for Fars, Col. E. C. Ross. Dated Simla, 16th September 1885.*
- 135 I. O. R. R/15/6/17. See the same letter.
- 136 I. O. R. R/15/6/17. See the same letter.
- 137 I. O. R. R/15/6/17. *Letter from the PRPG and the Consul-General for Fars, Col. E.C. Ross, to H. N. Durand, Esq, Secretary to the Government of India, Foreign Dept. Dated Bushire, 7th October 1885.*
- 138 I.O. R. R/15/6/17. See the same letter.
- 139 I. O. R. R/15/6/17. See the same letter.
- 140 I. O. R. R/15/6/17. *Letter from the Political Agent and Consul at Muscat, Lt. Col. Miles to the PRPG and the Consul-General for Fars, Lt. Col. Ross. Dated Muscat, 17th October 1885.*
- 141 I. O. R. R/15/6/17. See the same letter.
- 142 Kumar, R., *India and the Persian Gulf Region 1858-1907*, London; 1965, pp. 69-70.
- 143 I. O. R. R/15/6/18. *Letter from the Secretary to the Government of India Foreign Department, to the PRPG and the Consul-General for Fars, Col. Ross. Dated Simla, 9th February 1886.*
- 144 I. O. R. R/15/6/17. See the same letter.
- 145 I. O. R. R/15/6/18. *Letter from the Secretary to the Government of India, Foreign Dept. to the PRPG, and the Consul-General for Fars. Dated Simla, 31st, July 1886.*
- 146 I. O.R. R/15/6/17. See the same letter.

¹⁴⁷ I. O. R. R/15/6/17. *Letter from the Under Secretary to the Government of India to the PRPG and the Consul-General for Fars*. Dated Simla, 31st July 1886.

¹⁴⁸ I. O. R. R/15/6/18. *Letter from the Residency Agent at al-Sharjah, to the PRPG and the Consul-General for Fars*. Dated al-Sharjah, 15th May 1886.

¹⁴⁹ R. O. vol. ii, *Precis of Muscat Affairs*, pp. 202-203; See also Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 517.

¹⁵⁰ R. O. vol. ii, pp. 203-04.

¹⁵¹ Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 517.

¹⁵² R. O. vol. ii, *Precis of Muscat Affairs*, pp. 203-204.

¹⁵³ *Administration Report of the Persian Gulf Political Residency and Muscat Political Agency, for the year 1887-88*, vol. iii, p. 19.

¹⁵⁴ I. O. R. R/15/6/14. *See the Political Agent's Diary, Muscat Political Agency from 27th June to 11th July, 1887*.

¹⁵⁵ *Administration Report of the Persian Gulf Political Residency and Muscat Political Agency for the year 1887-88*, vol. iii, p. 19.

¹⁵⁶ I. O. R. R/15/6/14. *See the Political Agent's Diary, Muscat Political Agency from 27th June to 11th July, 1887*.

¹⁵⁷ *Administration Report of the Persian Gulf Political Residency and Muscat Political Agency for the year 1887-88*, vol. ii, p. 19.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.* pp. 19-20.

¹⁵⁹ R. O. vol. ii, *Precis of Muscat Affairs*, p. 205; Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 517.

¹⁶⁰ F.O. 84/1897. *Letter from British Political Agency & Consulate, Muscat, 16th March 1888*. No. 76 of 1888; *Administration Report of the Persian Gulf Political Residency and Muscat Political Agency for the year 1887-88*, vol. iii, p. 21.

¹⁶¹ *Administration Report of the Persian Gulf Political Residency and Muscat Political Agency for the year 1887-1888*, vol. iii, p. 21.

¹⁶² R. O. vol. ii, *Precis of Muscat Affairs*, p. 205. Lorimer, 1915, vol. i, p. 517.

¹⁶³ al-Mousawi, H. Y. H. *A History of Omani-British Relations, with Special Reference to the Period 1888-1920*, Ph.D. University of Glasgow; 1990, p. 80.

CONCLUSION

In nineteenth century Omani relationships were crucial both within ruling families and between their leading members, as well as with the British and the French. Wealth and power, and the struggle for them underpinned each situation. Relations between the sons of Sayyid Sa'id b. Sultan, Sayyid Thuwaini (the eldest surviving), Sayyid Turki, Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz, Sayyid Majid and Sayyid Barghash were characterised by jealousy, deceit, and animosity, with spells of cooperation. Sayyid Thuwaini kept the news of his father's death in 1856 secret from Sayyid Turki and his other brothers to ensure his succession by securing affirmations of loyalty from the people in the important towns. Sayyid Thuwaini and Sayyid Turki b. Sa'id were the two principle contenders for power in Oman while Sayyid Majid and Sayyid Barghash were the ones in Zanzibar. Sayyid Thuwaini found himself in disagreement with his brother in Zanzibar, and prepared his force to invade Zanzibar for the purpose of reuniting Muscat with Zanzibar. They were not uterine brothers, and this may have played a role in their relationship.

When the news of the death of Sayyid Sa'id reached Oman by the Zanzibar messenger to Muscat, Sayyid Turki was the Wali of Sohar, and he claimed the sovereignty of the district. Sayyid Thuwaini felt that his duty was to foil this attempt and to force Sayyid Turki to be one of his ordinary subjects. The British tried to mediate, and supported Sayyid Thuwaini in his operations. To achieve these aims, Sayyid Thuwani despatched his fleet to Sohar and soon gained possession of the town. Both the British authorities and the British Political Agent in Muscat supported the Sultan and welcomed his victory. Sayyid Sālim b. Thuwaini became the Sultan's Wali, and paid Sayyid Turki an allowance of \$MT 400-500. During this dispute the British representative Pengelly over-stepped his authority by helping to capture Sayyid Turki. The Government of Bombay believed that the British Agent in Muscat had

misunderstood his duty as British Agent. The action was not entirely accepted by the Government of India, who were keen to see Sayyid Turki freed.

By 1862, the decision to release Sayyid Turki had been taken and Sayyid Thuwaini made an important concession to the British when he agreed not to deport Sayyid Turki to East Africa. This settlement was significant in bringing the two brothers together, and Sayyid Turki provided his support to Sayyid Thuwaini in fighting the Wahhabis. As a result of this action the Bombay Government instructed Pengelly to inform the Sultan that the Government of Bombay wished to make it clear to the Sultan that any abuse of British friendship would likely lead to withdrawal of the British Agency from Muscat. The British were keen to see Sayyid Turki freed and Sayyid Thuwaini was ordered to free Sayyid Turki and to subsidise him financially.

Sayyid Sa'id had intended his son Khalid (who died young) to inherit his African dominions and Sayyid Thuwaini to inherit Oman; Sayyid Turki merely became ruler of Sohar, and Zanzibar went to Sayyid Majid. As Zanzibar had been the source of wealth to Muscat and its government, Sayyid Thuwaini had no intention of being deprived of the contribution which it made for the Muscat treasury. In early 1857 Sayyid Thuwaini managed to conclude an arrangement with Sayyid Majid whereby the latter agreed to transmit to Muscat an annual payment of \$MT 40,000. There was some ambiguity about the Zanzibar subsidy, centred on disagreement about whether it began as a tribute or a friendly contribution to a poorer brother. This ambiguity led to conflict when in 1858 Sayyid Majid broke his promise to his brother and refused to send the \$MT 40,000 to Muscat. Accordingly, at the end of the year Sayyid Thuwaini decided to settle matters between him and Sayyid Majid once and for all, by preparing to proceed militarily against Zanzibar.

In 1859 Sayyid Thuwaini had taken steps to invade Zanzibar, but this was thwarted by the British who forced him to return to Muscat and promise to secure a

settlement of the problems quickly as possible. Meanwhile Sayyid Majid helped Sayyid Turki to rise against Sayyid Thuwaini; the northern tribes were in revolt, and the British supported Sayyid Majid while the French supported Sayyid Thuwaini and Sayyid Barghash.

The British recommended the separation of Zanzibar and Muscat for many reasons, first to settle the question of the subsidy. Secondly the British considered the letter of Sayyid Sa'id b. Sultan to the Earl of Aberdeen on 23rd July 1844, of expressing his wish to divide his Empire between his most qualified sons a major factor in how to proceed. Thirdly, the British were keen to suppress the traffic in slavery between Muscat and Zanzibar, and they viewed the separation as the most effective method of controlling this illegal trade. Fourthly, British interests in Africa and in Zanzibar in particular led to the demise of Omani power with the Canning Award compensating the Sultan of Muscat with \$MT 40,000 for the loss of Zanzibar. Sayyid Majid was to rule Zanzibar and pay Sayyid Thuwaini, ruling Muscat, 40,000 Crowns annually. The payment of the subsidy was later transferred to the British India Government following the 1873 anti-slavery treaty with Sultan Turki. It was then continued from the Foreign Office in London after India achieved independence in 1947.

In 1866, after the murder of Sayyid Thuwaini by his son Sayyid Sālim, who claimed the throne and imprisoned Sayyid Turki again, Sayyid Majid protested at the payment of the Zanzibar subsidy to a parricide. However, the British recognised Sayyid Sālim, and the subsidy continued. During the following year Sayyid Turki was plotting with the Trucial Shaikhs, seeking support with the aim of establishing a revolt against Sayyid Sālim b. Thuwaini. Sayyid Turki strongly believed that he was the rightful heir to control Oman instead of Sayyid Sālim who was only the grandson of Sayyid Sa'id b. Sultan. However, because of the threat of British bombardment and the British refusal to consider Sayyid Turki as ruler, he withdrew in exchange for

a generous pension from Sayyid Sālim, and accepted exile in India. Sayyid Turki agreed to this arrangement as he wished to establish good relations with the British Government and the political representatives in the region to build on for the future.

Opposition to Sayyid Sālim now came from Sayyid 'Azzan b. Qais, supported by the conservative tribes (who generally were in favour of a religious leaders rather than a secular one-this meant specifically that they supported the Imāmate over the Sultanate) and the 'ulema, and he succeeded in expelling Sayyid Sālim from power in 1868. He immediately announced himself the elected Imām of the country. The conservative element attendant through Sayyid 'Azzan's accession to the Imāmate embodied several features of interest. Sayyid 'Azzan to them was the senior member of the government rather than the absolute ruler of Oman. As Sayyid 'Azzan agreed to share power with Shaikh Sa'id b. Khalfan al-Khalili and Shaikh Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali al-Harthi, the 'ulema felt that this policy would bring lasting government and stability to Oman-on their terms, of course. Under this circumstances the British were interested in ongoing peace included the safety of their communications cable via Muscat. The British, after 'Azzan's success in taking power, offered Sayyid Sālim b. Thuwaini asylum on board H.M.S. *Vigilant* which took him to Bandar Abbas.

Sayyid 'Azzan was now in charge of the Imāmate. The conservative tribes could not rebel against the Imām, as they had supported him against Sayyid Sālim and continued to do so. Their attitude was partial to the regime of Sayyid 'Azzan b. Qais. Meanwhile other tribes in Oman still wanted to see Sayyid Turki back from India. The British were at first ambiguous about this, even though they were unhappy with 'Azzan's rule. They decided to release Sayyid Turki, and at first gave him their tacit and then more practical support to regain the throne of Oman. In 1869 Sayyid Sālim tried to win the Trucial Shaikhs and the Wahhabi governor in al-Buraimi over to his cause. His attempt to recapture Muscat was unsuccessful as the British warned him against disturbing the peace at sea. Although Sayyid 'Azzan's regime became

established, because the British did not accept his sovereignty he did not receive the Zanzibar subsidy. The British had no interest in the stability of Azzan's sovereignty; but no violation of the maritime regulations would be tolerated and this hindered his opponents.

In 1870 the French and the Dutch recognised Sayyid 'Azzan b. Qais but still no British recognition was given. At this stage Sayyid Turki travelled privately to Muscat without material British support. Sayyid Sālim b. Thuwaini was also still trying to take over, in competition with Sayyid Turki. Sayyid Turki's first attempt at invasion was diverted by the British, but his next move soon took place in the south of Oman. At this stage Sayyid Turki's confidence about returning to Oman apparently vanished, and he believed that his plan concerning the Omani coast would only be achieved with British approval. In fact while Sayyid 'Azzan was away fighting the Wahhabis, the British forced Sayyid Turki to return to Bandar Abbas on many occasions, though they had no real objection to his overall intention of taking over the territories of Muscat. By August 1870, Sayyid Turki had gained ground, and the British authorities gradually and significantly advocated the claims of Sayyid Turki, who confirmed his power and ability to them, as well as to the people of Oman. Sayyid 'Azzan was losing support, and the British warned both Sayyid 'Azzan and Sayyid Turki that no military maritime movements were permitted. By this time Sayyid Turki had left Bandar Abbas, and the British Government of Bombay was making enquiries about the situation to its representatives in the region. The British Political Resident believed that Sayyid Turki was determined to take Muscat from Sayyid 'Azzan. Sayyid Turki then managed to land in the north and fortune now favoured him. After rallying the border tribes to his support he effected a surprise defeat on 'Azzan at Dhank. Sayyid Azzan then retired to Muscat preparing for the main battle while Sayyid Turki proceeded to Sur. At Sur Sayyid Turki assembled a large force commanded by Saif b. Sulaymān and marched northwards to Muscat in

January 1871. In the fighting which followed Sayyid 'Azzan was defeated and killed at Matrah, and Sayyid Turki moved to Muscat in February 1871. Subsequent to this Sayyid 'Azzan's advisor Shaikh al-Khalili was in Muscat, where the British Political Resident tried to mediate, using British neutrality as a tool in the dispute. Shaikh al-Khalili agreed to surrender himself to Sayyid Turki. Al-Khalili and his son were afterward imprisoned in al-Jalali fort where they died in suspicious circumstances.

In April 1871, the British recognised Sayyid Turki's rule, and encouraged him to complete his dominance of Muscat territories. Sohar was still not taken, and Shaikh Ṣaliḥ and Ibrahim b. Qais were plotting against Sayyid Turki. Threats to the stability of Sayyid Turki's rule included Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais, who held Sohar and a large part of the Batinah coast, and threatened Muscat. Later threats of invasion came from Bandar Abbas and then from Gwader where the ex-Sultan Sālim was in exile planning for a return to recapture power in Oman. Meanwhile the Wahhabis in al-Buraimi were unruly. In all contests, the British authorities were fully informed about the situation in Oman, through their Agent in Muscat and the British Political Resident in the Gulf. They were able to put pressure on the various parties, when in June 1871 the British authorities in both London and India officially recognised Sayyid Turki as Sultan. His close relations with the British enabled them to be more effective and influential in the affairs of Oman, while the Sultan recognised his dependences on this influence for keeping him in power. The British were encouraged to maintain the presence of warships off the Omani coast.

In July 1871 Sayyid Turki started his operation against Sayyid Ibrahim on the Batinah coast, but failed to evict him from Sohar and had to draw up an agreement: Sayyid Ibrahim was allowed to remain there. Later in February 1873 Sultan Turki was able to recover the important towns on the Batinah coast from Sayyid Ibrahim's control, like al-Khaburah, Barka and Sohar. As a result of these losses, Sayyid Ibrahim agreed to enter into negotiation with the Sultan which resulted in the surrender

of the rest of the towns on the coast to the Sultan. In this settlement Sayyid Ibrahim immediately received the sum of \$MT 5,000 and a monthly pension of \$MT 100 conditional on his not rising against the Sultan. Sayyid Sālim and Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz continued feuding in Gwader on the Mekran coast; Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz was captured at sea by the British and paid to stay away. Sayyid Sālim maintained his efforts, but was also captured by a British ship on his way to Sur, and imprisoned in India.

Shaikh Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali was still threatening Sayyid Turki in al-Sharqiyyah where he mounted an operation to attack Muscat in August 1873. Sultan Turki enjoyed British support which was guaranteed to Muscat in the event of any attack. Negotiations between Shaikh Ṣaliḥ b. Ali and the Sultan were arranged, and the attackers accepted the Sultan's offer. Shaikh Ṣaliḥ temporarily retired to the interior in 1874. At the same time Sayyid Ibrahim encouraged by the latest attack on Muscat by Ṣaliḥ b. 'Ali, returned from al-Rustaq to attack the towns on the Batinah coast. However, the British supported Sayyid Turki, as the the British subjects in the area were suffering. This led to further negotiations, and the British imposed fines on those causing damage to British subjects or property. The losses of the British subjects were estimated at \$MT 15,000, which was imposed on Sayyid Ibrahim and his allies of 'Yal Sa'd, by the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, Colonel Ross, in the form of a fine. The Resident left the issue under the Agent's consideration. Sayyid Turki's authority was considerably strengthened, and his reputation grew through out the region. During the mid 1870s and 1880s the authority in Muscat became interested in extending its territory, to some ports belonging to the Qawasim, including Khor Fakkan and al-Fujairah. The British were opposed to any further enlargement of the Sultan's territory and prevented him from acting on this front.

Relations between Sultan Turki and his brother Sayyid 'Abd al-'Azzan b. Sa'id, who tried to remove him from power, were cordial only between mid-1874 and

late 1875. At all other times Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz was influenced by Sayyid Turki's enemies, especially Shaikh Ṣaliḥ b. 'Alī al-Ḥarṭhi, who was the paramount Shaikh of al-Ḥirṭh and had control over all his tribe and the rest of the Hinawi tribes in al-Sharqiyyah and the interior of Oman. Shaikh Ṣaliḥ with the support of the conservative tribes led many attacks against Muscat to try and overthrow the Sultan's government and set up an Ibadi state in Oman. The conservative method of building a state was based on tribal organisation, and used their religious position as an effective force to achieve this aim. The conservative tribes were unsuccessful in working with the British, mainly because the British feared their government would have a harmful effect on the commercial interests of the British Indian subjects and the British supported their opponents with which the Sultan had laid the foundation of a stable order in Oman.

Subsequently Sayyid Turki persuaded the Government of India to release Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz, in the hope that he would assist him. He was appointed his deputy, on written conditions which he ignored. During the year 1875, while Sayyid Turki was suffering from illness, Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz planned his own rising. In August the same year he resigned as deputy but Sayyid Turki needed to withdraw temporarily from power because of his health, and he prepared for a short break from Oman and its burdens, and re-appointed him. In power, Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz and his newly-appointed advisor, Shaikh Ṣaliḥ b. 'Alī, faced a number of problems, including the resumption of hostilities by Sayyid Ṣālim b. Thuwaini. Sayyid Turki soon found his health sufficiently strong to resume power in December 1875, returning from Gwader. The Sultan immediately launched his attack on Matrah where Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz's garrison refused to submit the town to the Sultan's authority, and the Sultan had to threaten to attack Muscat before Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz surrendered and was later paid to stay away, though his plotting continued.

In 1877 new enemies were plotting: Shaikh Ṣaliḥ b. 'Alī, and Ḥamud al-Jahhafi of al-Wahibah led the principal attacks in Oman on the Sultan's authority, and Shaikh Ṣaliḥ's allies prepared for another attack on Muscat. At the same time Sayyid Ibrahim started his campaign against the Sultan on the Batinah coast, but Sultan Turki arranged to make payments to all these involved to prevent trouble. Meanwhile the British supported Sultan Turki by fending off Shaikh Ṣaliḥ and Sayyid Ibrahim who had a remained source of trouble to the authority of Muscat. In 1879 the British Political Agent in Muscat detected Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz' activity on Sultan Turki's behalf, seeking a rejection of hostilities. The Sultan also gained further British support in the dispute of 1879-81 between the Janabah of Sur and the Malkhi tribe of Ras al-Ḥadd, a few kilometres east of Sur, when the British broke the Ras al-Ḥadd blockade by deploying a warship.

In 1881 Sultan Turki proposed to relinquish his rule in favour of his brother Sultan Barghash, as he was affected greatly by the troubles his opponents caused him as well as by his worsening health. The British took a strong stand against this suggestion because they wanted to maintain the separation of Muscat and Zanzibar, and were willing to support Turki in his illness, believing that Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz and Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais would never accept Sayyid Turki's sons in power. The British observed developments closely, and dismissed any plan that might upset the status quo. Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais's conquest of al-Masna'ah on the Batinah coast was quickly overturned with the help of Sayyid Barghash's money and British support. The Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz and Ḥamud al-Jahhafi coalition which threatened Sayyid Turki in 1882 was dismissed and paid off. The Sultan also agreed in 1883 to pay off Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais, who agreed to change sides, while the British use of a gunboat frightened off Shaikh Ṣaliḥ b. 'Alī who was planning to attack Muscat. However, plots by Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz, Shaikh Ṣaliḥ b. 'Alī and Sayyid Ibrahim b. Qais against Sultan Turki continued. By the middle of 1883 Shaikh Ṣaliḥ b. 'Alī was

joined by Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz in his preparation against Muscat, denying all his previous assurances to the Sultan. Between 1885-88 Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz acted effectively in raising a rebellion and attacking Muscat. In 1887 Shaikh Ṣalīḥ b. 'Alī and Sayyid Ibrahim were operating against the Sultan's authority. Sayyid Ibrahim was planning to re-establish himself on the Batinah coast but this operation was swiftly demolished by the Sultan's military. Sayyid Ibrahim then found himself in a difficult situation and retired to his base in al-Rustaq. Shaikh Ṣalīḥ b. 'Alī's move against Muscat ended unsuccessfully following British threats against any hostilities against Muscat. As a result of British policy towards Muscat, and the British belief that stability could not be achieved without their active support to the Sultan, all rivals to Sultan Turki's throne were forced to give up their attempts to wrest power from him until his death in June 1888.

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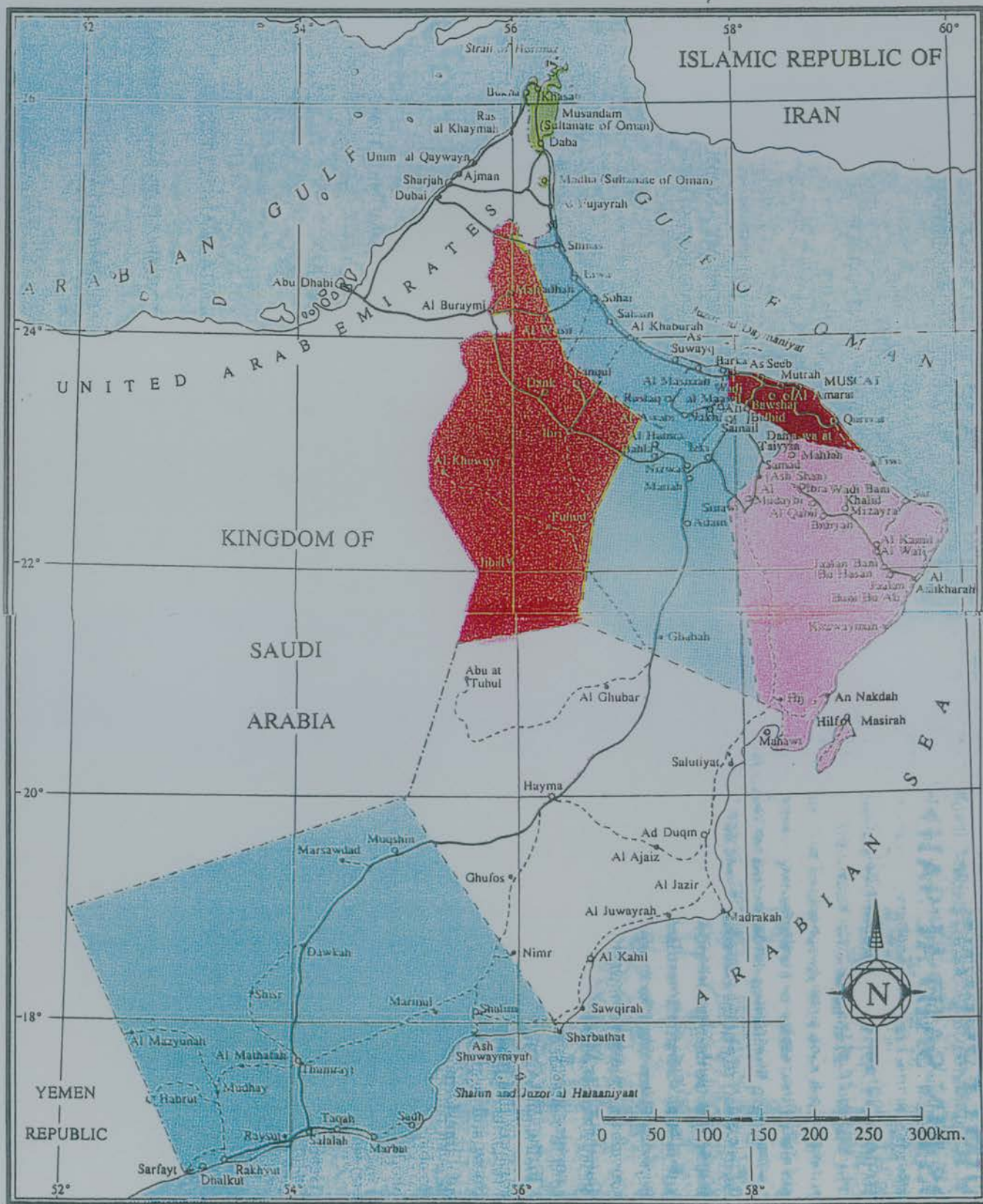
His Highness Sayyid Muḥammed b. Aḥmad Al-Bu-Saidi, Adviser of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said. September, 1996.

His Highness Sayyid Barghash b. Said Al-Bu-Saidi, Adviser in the Office of His Highness the Sultan's Private Representative Office, Muscat. August, 1996.

His Excellency Mālik b. Sulaymān al-Ma'amri, the Minister of Housing. August, 1996.

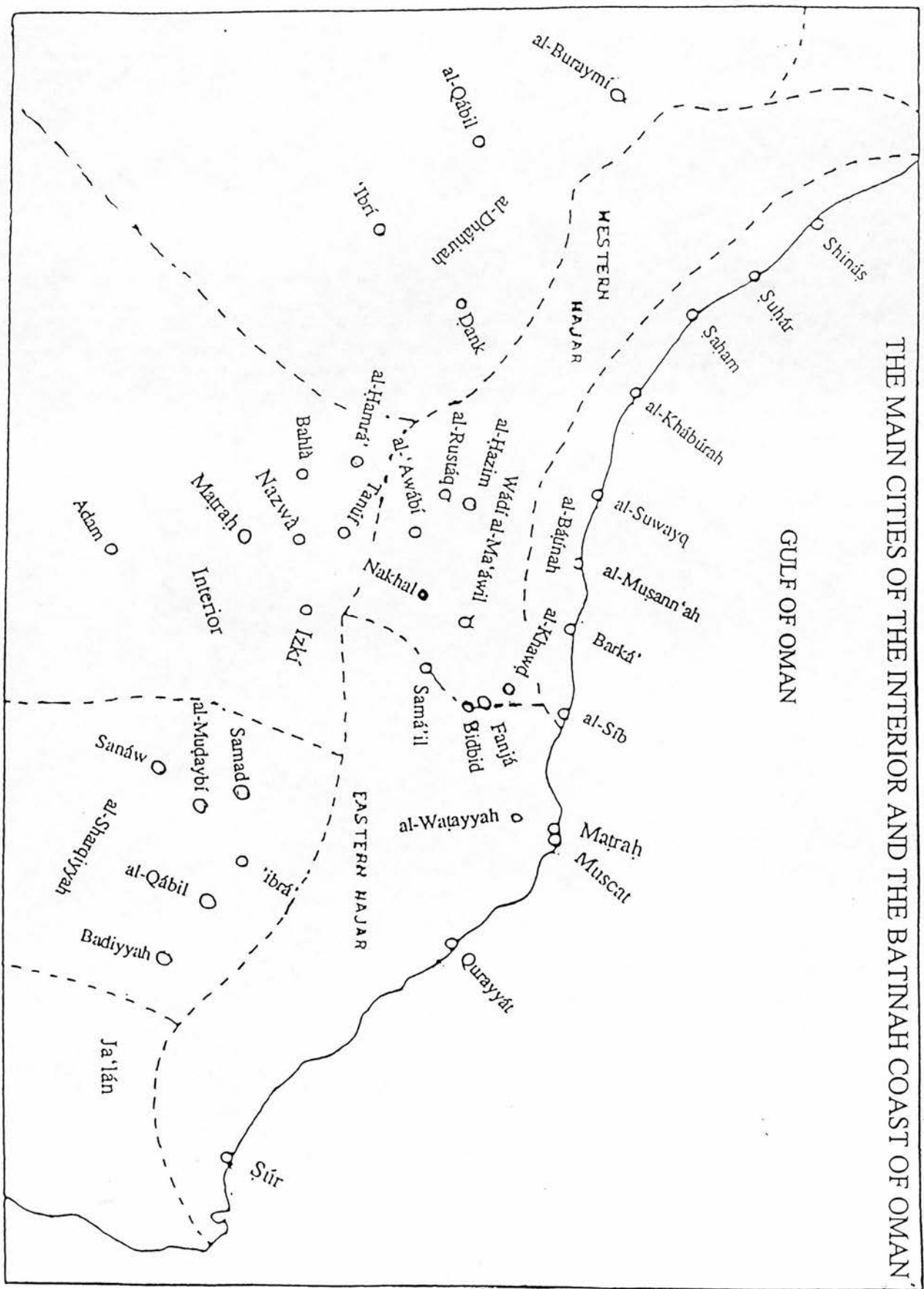
Sayyid Ḥamūd b. Ali Al-Bu-Saidi. August 1996.

SULTANATE OF OMAN



Produced by the Ministry of Information, September 1994
Based on National Survey Authority OR 1, edition 6 dated June 1994
This map is not an authority on international boundaries

- Wilayat - - - - - Graded Road
 - - - - - Metalled Road
 ● Village/ Town - - - - - International Boundary



source: al-Hashimi, S. M., Imam Salim b. Rashid in the Imamate Revival in Oman. 1913-1920, (Ph.D) Leeds University, 1994.

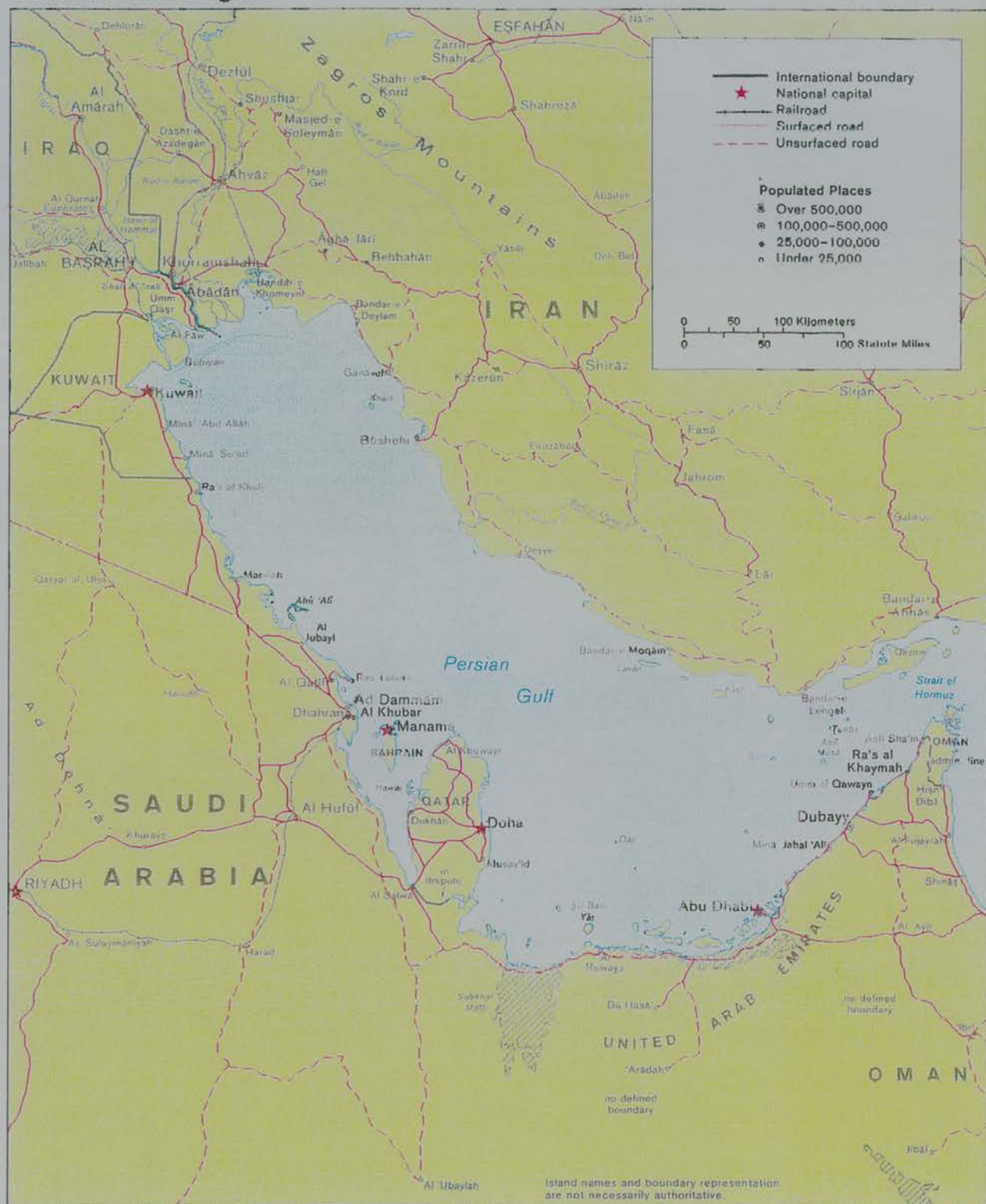


Source: Central Intelligence Agency, (CIA), Year Book 1991, Washington, D.C.



Source: Central Intelligence Agency, (CIA), Year Book 1996, Washington, D.C.

Persian Gulf Region



504822 (546740) 7-81

Source: Central Intelligence Agency, (CIA), Year Book 1981, Washington, D.C.

Western Indian Ocean



800158 (544527) 5-85

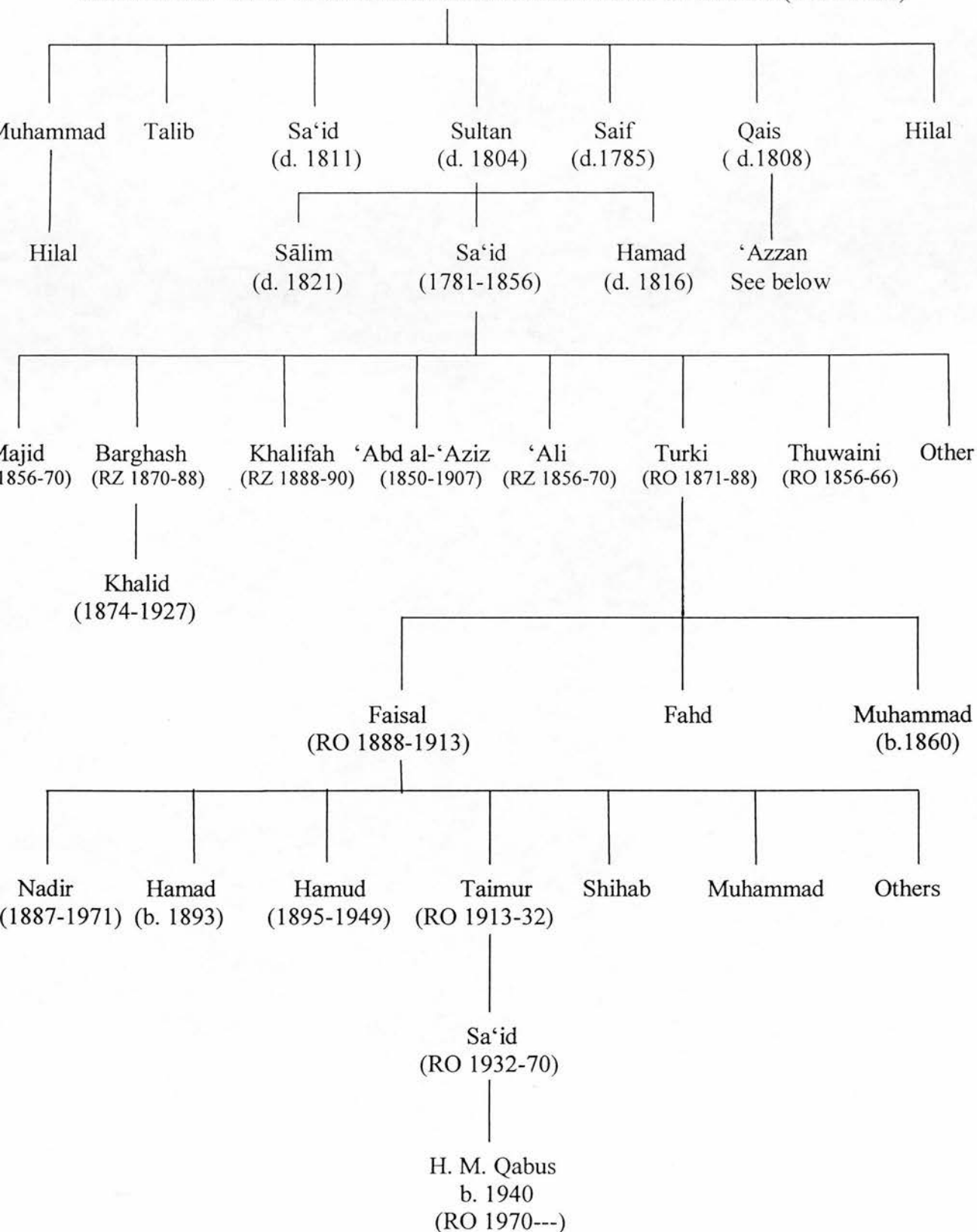
Source: Central Intelligence Agency, (CIA), Year Book 1985, Washington, D.C.



Source: Central Intelligence Agency, (CIA), Year Book 1995, Washington, D.C.

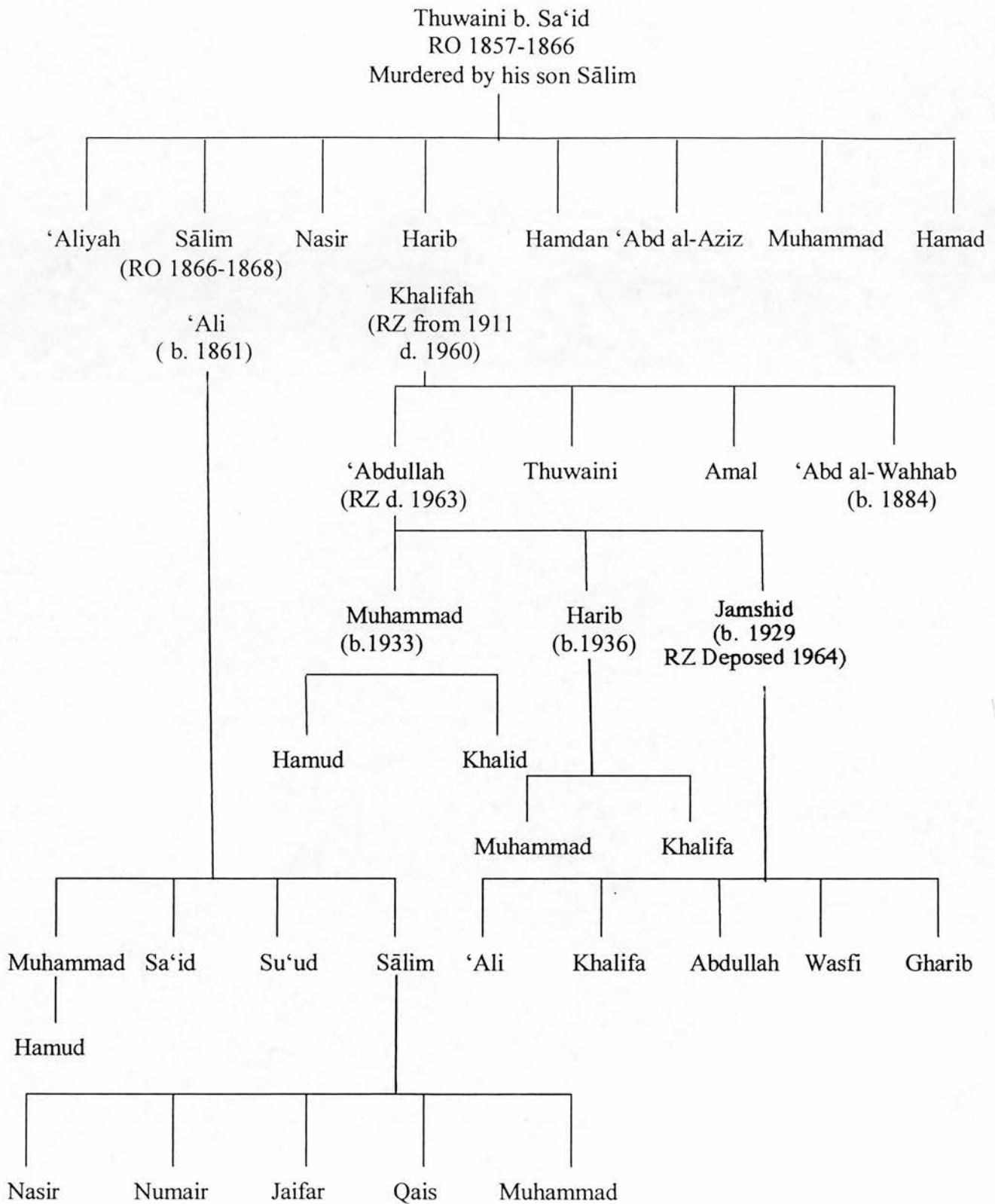
Family tree of the Al Bū Sa'id Dynasty

Imam Ahmad bin Sa'id bin Ahmad bin Muhammad Al Bu Sa'idi ruled (1744-1782)



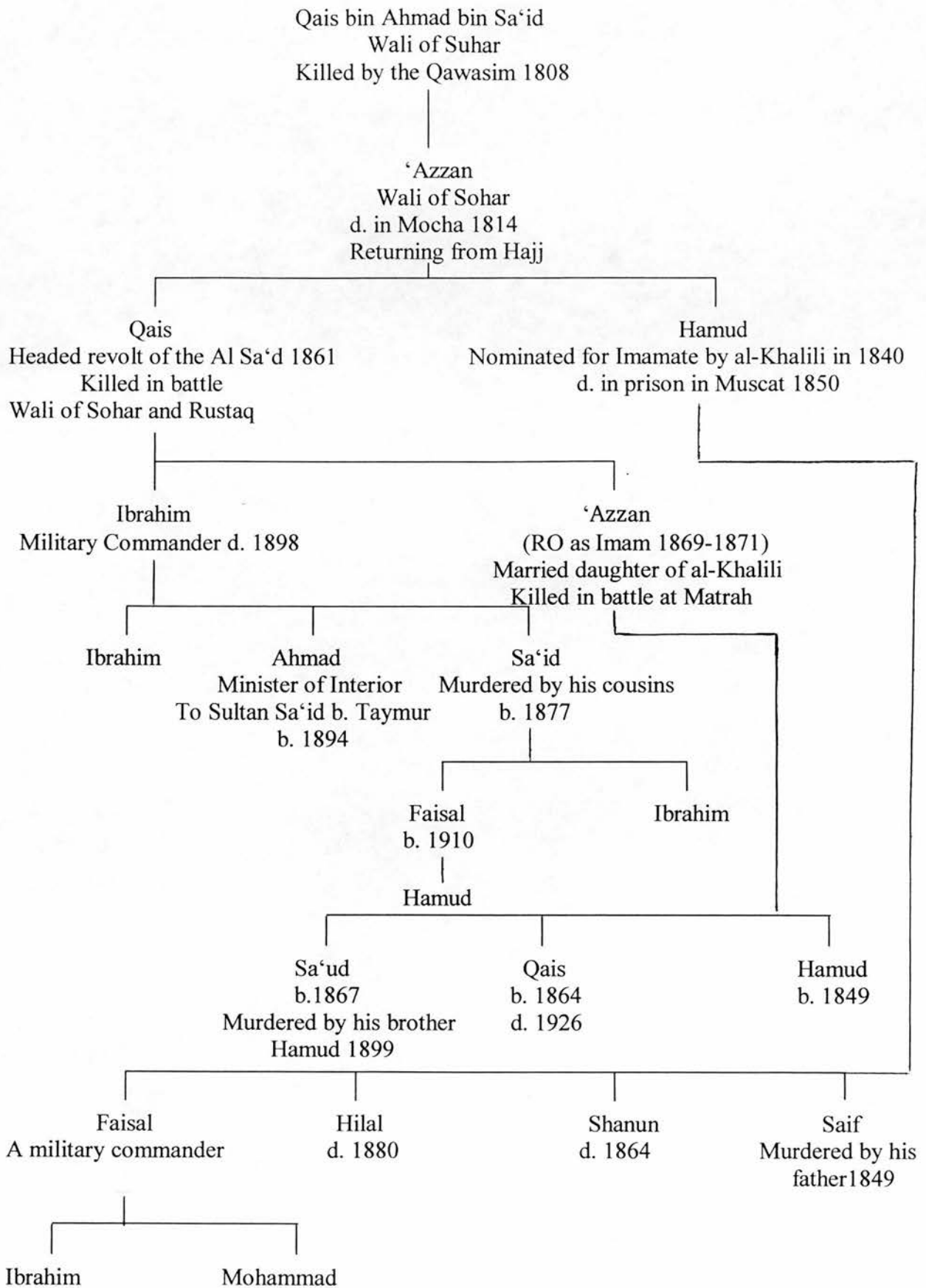
Source: al-Hashimi, S. M., Imam Salim b. Rashid in the Imamate Revival in Oman. 1913-1920, (Ph.D) University, 1994.

Family tree of Sayyid Thuwaini b. Sa'id



Source: Hawley, D., Oman and its Renaissance, London; 1977.

Family tree of Sayyid ‘Azzan b. Qais



Source: Hawley, D., Oman and its Renaissance, London; 1977.

Table of the British Residents in the Gulf

The following table shows the British Political Residents in the Persian Gulf from 1862-1905

Name	Dates in post
Lt-Col Lewis Pelly	November 1862-October 1872
Lt-Col Edward Charles Ross	October 1872-March 1891
Lt-Col Samuel Barrett Miles	1885- October 1886 (acting)
Lt-Col Adelbert Cecil Talbot	March 1891-May 1893
Major James Hayes Sadler	June 1893-July 1893 (acting)
James Adair Grawford	July 1893-December 1893
Major James Hayes Sadler	December 1893-January 1894 (acting)
Col Frederick Alexander Wilson	January 1894-June 1897
Lt-Col Malcolm John Meade	June 1897-April 1900
Lt-Col Charles Arnold Kemball	April 1900-April 1904 (acting)

Source: Political Agency Muscat, 1800-1947

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Table of the British Agents in Muscat

The following table shows the British Political Agents at Muscat from 186 to 1905.

Name	Dates in post
Lt. W. M. Pongelley	May 1861 to January 1862
Major M. Green	February 1862 to October 1862
Lt. Col. Herbert Disbrowe	January 1863 to February 1867
Captain G. A. Atkinson	March 1867 to February 1869
Lt. Col. Herbert Disbrowe	April 1869 to January 1870
Major A. Cotton Way	January 1870 to May 1871
Major E.C. Ross	May 1871 to December 1872
Captain S.B. Miles	December 1872 to June 1877
Mr.P. J.C. Robertson	June 1877 to January 1878
Lt. Col. S.B. Miles	January 1878 to June 1879
Major C. B. Euan Smith	July 1879 to January 1880
Major Charles Grant	February 1880 to October 1880
Lt. Col. S. B. Miles	October 1880 to August 1881
Major Charles Grant	August 1881 to March 1883

Major E. Mockler	April 1883 to September 1883
Lt. Col. S.B. Miles	September 1883 to April 1886
Lt.Col. E. Mockler	April 1886 to October 1886
Lt. S. B. Miles	November 1886 to April 1887
Lt. Col. E. Mockler	April 1887 to March 1889
Lt. W. Stratton	March 1889 to December 1889
Major C. E. Yate	December 1889 to March 1890
Lt. Col. E. Mockler	December 1890 to October 1891
Major J. Hayes Sadler	November 1892 to April 1895
Captain J. F. Whyte	May 1895 to November 1895
Major J. Hayes Sadler	November 1895 to April 1896
Captain F. A. Beville	April 1896 to June 1897
Major C. G. F. Fagan	September 1897 to September 1899
Major P. Z. Cox	September 1899 to January 1904
Major W. G. Grey	January 1904 to April 1908

Source: Political Agency, Muscat, 1800-1947

R/15/6

Table shows the rulers of Oman 1856 to 1888

Sayyid Thuwaini b. Sa'id	October 1856-February 1866
Sayyid Sālim b. Thuwaini	February 1866-October 1868
Sayyid 'Azzan b. Qais	October 1868-February 1871
Sayyid Turki b. Sa'id	February 1871-June 1888

Source: Records of Oman, vol. 1v, 1867-1947, London, 1988

Translation of a Communication from His Highness the Imam of Muscat, to the Right Honourable the Earl of Aberdeen; dated Zanzibar, 23rd July 1844, 6th Rajab 1260.

BE it known to your Lordship that we are always grateful for, and sensible of, the kindness of the British Government. We are, as it were, overwhelmed with a sense of received favours.

2. In the treaty between us and Her Majesty Queen of England, concluded and signed at Muscat, on the 22nd July 1840, it is mentioned that the obligations are binding on us, and our posterity, and for which we all feel happy; please God, during our lifetime, all will be duly fulfilled on our parts, we will abide by it.

3. And after us (on our death), we constitute and appoint our son Sayyid Khalid to be the ruler of all our African possessions; that is to say, all places on the continent of Africa, between Mogadisho, situated in about 2 10 north latitude, and Cape Delgado, situated in about 10 42 south latitude, together with the adjacent islands, now subject to our rule, and under our dominion. And in like manner our son, Sayyid Thuwaini, to be ruler over all our possessions in Oman, in Arabia, in the Persian Gulf, and on the coast of Persia. And please God the two before mentioned, our sons, Sayyid Khalid and Sayyid Thuwaini, will strictly conform to the stipulations of the treaty, and, furthermore, do things in conformity with the wishes of the British Government; and our hope and desire is, that the British Government may be favourably disposed towards these our sons, Sayyid Khalid and Sayyid Thuwaini. And we feel certain that the Government will not withhold its friendship from them.

Whatever you require of us, it is for you to signify.

From the expectant of God's mercy.

(signed) *Sa'id b.Sultan* (signed) *Atkins Hamerton*. Zanzibar, 14 April 1859

Letter from His Highness Sayyid Thuwaini bin Said

To

His Excellency Lord Canning, Governor-General of India

In the name of the Great " God "

After compliments, at a most propitious and favourable time we were honoured with the receipt of your esteemed letter and were highly gratified with its contents. What your Excellency has stated is most satisfactory to us, more especially as regard your award betwixt us and our brother Majid, we heartily accepted the same and are at a loss how to express our regret for having occasioned you so much trouble, and our appreciation of the kindness which had been manifested towards us in this matter. We thank "God" for your efforts on our behalf, praying also that your good may be rewarded and that you never cease to be our support. We further pray that our sincere affection may always be towards the Great British Government, and that it may increase continually: Moreover, that, your exalted affection and noble solicitude may always be exercised towards us, and that we may never be deprived thereof. As regard our brother Majid, we pray "God" during our life-time he may never experience anything from us but kindness and hearty good will. Furthermore, we rely implicitly on your Arbitration between us.

What your Excellency may require in any way from your attached friend, a hint alone will suffice for its accomplishment, and we shall feel honoured in executing it.

We pray finally that you may be preserved to the highest honour and the most perfect health. We send you the solution of peace as the best conclusion.

From your truly sincere friend the servant of "God", who confide on him as the Giver of all good.

4th of Dhul-Ka'dah, 1277 Hijri equivalent 15th May, 1861.

Thuwaini bin Sa'id bin Sultan.

Source Parliamentary Papers, vol. xii, (1871).